Vol. IV. No. 2 APRIL, 1955

TAMIL CULTURE

JOURNAL OF THE ACADEMY OF TAMIL CULTURE

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The Problem of a 'National' or 'Official Language' in India

A SENTHAMILAN

An objective and dispassionate consideration of this subject is handicapped by the many extraneous and irrelevant issues which protagonists of the different points of view have succeeded in introducing into the discussion. If it is desired to lessen the confusion surrounding the issue and thus ultimately to pave the way for a solution of the problem, it is necessary first of all to define the issues involved in unambiguous terms and to remind ourselves of the necessity for approaching the problem with an open mind.

The most powerfully backed and organised view is that of the advocates of Hindi and hence it is entitled to serious consideration. It is essential in the first place to ascertain definitely what the objectives of the Hindi School of thought are. Do they merely advocate the acceptance of Hindi as the 'official language' of the Union of India as laid down in the *Constitution*,[1] or have they a wider aim, namely, to secure the acceptance of Hindi as the sole 'national language' of India, *i.e.*, as the language which will eventually be spoken throughout India at all levels? The uncertainty about the objective generates a turbid atmosphere surcharged with suspicion, prejudice and, what is worse, bitterness. No one can view this with equanimity, as in the meantime political parties make capital out of it and exploit the situation for partisan benefit.

The distinction between a 'national language' and an 'official language' is no mere academic or sophistic

1 *The Constitution of India*, Madras, 1952, Art. 343 (1).

abstraction, but one of vital importance to the future of India and its peoples. Any action that is not based on a proper understanding of this distinction would represent merely that much of wasted effort, quite apart from the bitterness that inevitably follows in its train. An attempt is therefore made here to focus attention on this distinction.

A 'national language' is one which is spoken by a large compact group of people in a geographically continuous area; it is the language spoken by the generality of its members from their childhood. It is the language of every day use, whose idioms and rich metaphor are drawn from situations with which people are instinctively familiar; it is also the language whose phonetic structure and euphony are well grasped and whose basic vocabulary is understood and used without effort by every one who speaks the tongue. An 'official language' on the other hand is the language of administration, and does not always fulfil the above criteria, especially in the present day world of colonial rule, multi-national states and the limited forms of World Government that the United Nations and similar agencies represent. The different purposes which language —national or official—might serve are described in detail later.

It is unfortunate that this distinction has not always been clearly maintained by the participants in the language controversy. If it is intended that Hindi should be made the 'national language' of India, it is only fair, and possibly imperative, that this should be made clear because, irrespective of what people in other States may feel, neither the masses nor enlightened public opinion in Tamil Nad will ever agree to such a course. It is true that opportunists and others less wilful and dishonest but equally the victims of expediency may—not always whole-heartedly —pay lip service to Hindi as the 'national language' move. But, it is well to remember that, arraigned against them are one or two organisations in Tamil Nad of not inconsiderable influence, who have adopted "Down with Hindi"

as one of their principal slogans. It is unfortunately not so well-known as it ought to be that, outside these opposing organisations, there are vast numbers of sober, responsible people who are keenly interested in the problem and whose views have not received the same publicity, particularly outside Tamil Nad. These people are opposed unequivocally to the adoption of Hindi, English or any other language (not excluding Tamil) as the sole 'national language' of India, aware as they are that it is a totally impracticable proposition. There is little doubt that, in the event of a show down, Tamilians of every shade of thought will support this view. Krishnaswami Bharathi, a longstanding Congressman and a member of the Constituent Assembly which framed the Constitution of India, wrote as follows:

"I read the article of Sri G. V. Mavlankar, in your daily of the 19th instant under the title 'Hindi Pilgrimage to the South', with all the interest and attention that it deserves. Sri Mavlankar is an astute intellectual and is generally accepted as a well-informed scholar. I must therefore confess to a sense of surprise that he of all persons should have made himself responsible for certain statements therein, which require correction in the interest of truth and knowledge.

"Sri Mavlankar says that 'Hindi in Devanagari script has been now accepted as the national language by our Constitution.' May I point out to him, in all humility, that this is not a correct statement of fact? *The Constitution of India* nowhere refers to Hindi as the national language. All that the Act says is that 'the official language of the Union shall be Hindi in Devanagari script.'

"Need I hardly emphasize the vital difference between the word 'national' and the word 'official', both in its content and signification. As one who actively helped in the framing of the Constitution, I may say that we deliberately eschewed the word 'national' in reference to Hindi, as it cannot properly fit into the context of the scheme of the Act in as much as the different regional states are given the right in the Constitution itself to adopt, by law, one or more regional languages to be the official language for the concerned States. With India presenting the ultimate picture of the different

States adopting their own regional languages as the official language of the respective States, Hindi can, by no stretch of imagination, be called the national language of India." [2]

Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar, Vice-Chancellor of the Annamalai and Banaras Hindu Universities, who has no political axe to grind in opposing Hindi, made the following statement before the University Education Commission:

"A Madrasee will have to be taught through Tamil, Telugu, Kanarese or Malayalam. *To him Hindi is as foreign as English,* French or Russian. *I can definitely tell you that you can never make Madras learn Hindi.* This aspect of the question is not borne in mind by many who write on this subject." [3]

In fact, recorded history, with all the colossal race and language movements it portrays, is unable to offer us a single instance of a foreign[4] language succeeding in assuming the character of a national language, and existing on a co-equal plane with the native tongue. The adoption of a single language as the national language in a multilingual state raises the same fundamental issues and is similarly doomed to failure.

Any student of Anthropology or the Social Sciences will confirm that such a possibility would be inconceivable in the case of any large, well defined linguistic group, living together in a compact area. There have, of course, been many instances of attempts by conquerors (or a dominant group) to impose their language on the conquered peoples (or a minority group); but such experiments, which betray ignorance of linguistic psychology, have always failed and have resulted invariably in either

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2 *Indian Express*, Madras, October 1, 1954.

3 *Report of the University Education Commission*, Delhi, 1951—Vol. II, Part II, P. 674. (Italics mine).

4 A 'foreign' language in this context would include any tongue other than the mother tongue. Hindi would for instance be in this sense a 'foreign' language to the Tamil speaking people and Tamil would be classified similarly in relation to the Hindi-speaking population.

(*a*) one of the languages being driven out from the field, or (*b*) the disappearance of both languages, to be succeeded by an amorphous amalgam of the two, as in the case of North Indian languages whose structural characteristics are partly Aryan and partly Dravidian. In more recent times, imperialistic countries have often endeavoured to impose their language on the subject peoples of their colonial empires, but whilst the foreign language was adopted for limited purposes, it was never accorded a comparable status as a 'national language.' It always remained a foreign tongue, ready to be discarded the moment circumstances were propitious, although meantime the national or native tongue had but a stunted and anaemic existence.

Statesmen in multi-lingual countries have, in the past, shown great wisdom in handling this problem. In Switzerland, for instance, instead of forcing the majority language on the minority groups, they succeeded in getting the majority as well as all the minority languages recognised as national languages of the State: all the national languages save one were also adopted as official languages, the exception being the Romansh language which is spoken by less than 1 per cent of the population. Thus Canada has adopted English and French, Belgium French and Dutch, Switzerland German, French and Italian. Even the German speaking Swiss, though they belong to a race considered to be assertive and race proud and though they constitute a large majority (72 per cent) of the population, had the foresight to decide the issue not by counting heads, but by conceding even to the small minority of Italians, constituting only 6 per cent of the population, the benefits of having their mother tongue as one of the official languages.

In this connection it is well to clear up a misconception that appears to have arisen as a result of a confusion in regard to the connotation of the concepts 'nation' and

'nationality'. In the words of A. L. Kroeber, a distinguished anthropologist and student of linguistic problems,

> "nationality and nation are not necessarily the same, although they sometimes coincide . . . . An essentially single nationality can comprise several states that in modern political terminology are called nations such as Australians, New Zealanders, Canadians and British. On the contrary, most large states, and especially empires, have comprised a variety of nationalities . . . . Nation denotes a people organised under one Government, a 'body politic' . . . .

> "Here are some contemporary cases of political nations that include two or more nationalities. Belgium is almost equally divided between Waloons speaking a French dialect in their homes and Flemings speaking a variant of Dutch. Switzerland is 72 per cent German speaking, 21 per cent French, 6 per cent Italian, 1 per cent Romansh. The Union of South Africa has a white population that is part English speaking and part Afrikaans or Dutch speaking, plus the racially distinct Bantu-Negro natives. India in 1947 set up house keeping on its own, as two independent political nations with dozens of nationalities and languages." [5]

What is the role and importance of language in the formation of nationalities? Again to quote Kroeber:

> "It is clear that of the several objective factors which operate to produce nationalities, language is on the whole much the most important. Without the free inter-communication that common speech provides, it is very difficult for the 'consciousness of kind' that is the subjective psychological precondition of nationality to arise." [6]

Finally, Kroeber also dealt with the problem of language differences and political unity:

> "There is a general understanding among the Swiss Citizenry that neither religion nor linguistic consideration is to serve as a basis for political crystallization.[7] In India, on the contrary, religious cleavage has proved

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5 A. L. Kroeber, in *Anthropology*—New York, 1948, p. 226-227.

6 Kroeber, *op. cit* p. 227.

a strong obstacle to political unity in the formative period. Language diversity was felt to be much less of a bar perhaps because of the wide availability of English speech on upper educational levels. Should political intransigence drive out English, the diversity of nationalities kept separate by speech might become a greater threat to the political cohesiveness of India."[8]

These are weighty remarks from the pen of a detached scholar, which have a ring of prophecy about them and which every Indian should read and re-read with care and solicitude. It is, of course, up to us to prove that Kroeber was mistaken in his forecast about the political cohesiveness of India. This cannot be achieved, however, by mere wishful thinking. It requires first and foremost a recognition that the demand for linguistic states is a clear and unambiguous index to the 'consciousness of kind' which, reinforced by other factors, has produced many nationalities in India during the past 2,000 years and more. To ignore this development, or to delude oneself, like the proverbial ostrich, that it does not exist, is to ignore one of the most obvious and inescapable facts of history. Any attempt to circumvent or suppress this feeling of nationality based on language will surely result in mortal violence to the political unity of our country, which it should be the aim of every Indian to promote. The feeling that if somehow a single national language is forced on the multi-lingual population of India it would bring about unity is a dangerous illusion engendered by sheer wishful thinking and displays a gross ignorance of linguistic psychology. In fact it will have just the opposite effect.

Having dealt with the 'national language' aspect, we shall now consider the question from the 'official language' angle. If the advocates of Hindi have as their objective the adoption of Hindi, merely as the 'official language' of the Indian Union, there is scope for better understand-

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7 This has been made possible only because of the Swiss practice of giving equal recognition to all their major languages.

8 *Ibid.* p. 228.

ing between such advocates of Hindi and those who are not necessarily opposed to Hindi but would nevertheless prefer linguistic provisions based on practical considerations.

Before we deal with this issue however, it is desirable to formulate exact views regarding the 'regional language'. If it is accepted that the essence of democracy is government by the people, no government which is administered in a language not spoken and understood by the people can satisfy this vital requirement of democracy. Bharatan Kumarappa, a close associate of Mahatma Gandhi, said with reference to Mahatma Gandhi's views :

> "Gandhiji felt that for the rapid regeneration of our people, the first step was to remove straightaway the foreign medium of instruction from our schools and replace it by the mother tongue. 'If I had the powers of a despot, I would to-day stop the tuition of our boys and girls through a foreign medium, and require all teachers and professors on pain of dismissal to introduce the change forthwith. I would not wait for the preparation of text-books. They will follow the change. It is an evil that needs a summary remedy.' (*Young India*, 1-9-1921). But what, it may be asked, has all this to do with the question of linguistic States ? Everything, would be Gandhiji's reply. For the language of schools must also be the language of the State. In a democracy you cannot have a State run in a language foreign to the people. Hence the States have to be recognized on the basis of the language of the area." [9]

No one who believes in democracy can therefore contest the absolute necessity for education and the administration of the State to be in the language of people of the State. If this is conceded, the next issue to be considered is the specific function to be performed by the 'official language' of the Union.

In order to arrive at an agreed range of functions, it would prove most profitable if we were to spell out the

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9 *Hindustan Times*, Delhi, October 4, 1954.

different needs to be fulfilled by language in India, in its three aspects, *viz.*, regional, administrative (or official) and international. Having thus narrowed the range of needs which the proposed official language might serve, it should then be possible for us to decide which language is best fitted to be the official language.

Broadly, the functions served by the different languages in India are :

(*i*) The medium of spoken and written communication generally within the region.

(*ii*) the medium of instruction in non-scientific and non-technical subjects ;

(*iii*) the medium of instruction in scientific and technical subjects ;

(*iv*) the language of administration of the State, local bodies, etc. ;

(*v*) the language of administration at the Centre and the medium of communication between the Centre and the States and between the States themselves ;

(*vi*) the medium of contact with world developments in the fields of science, technology, etc. ;

(*vii*) the medium of cultural contacts with the outside world, particularly in regard to economic and political concepts ;

(*viii*) the medium of international contacts in the fields of diplomacy, foreign trade, etc.

With the exception of item (*i*) and partly item (*ii*), all the other language needs are at present met by the English language, no doubt, largely as a consequence of historical factors. In the future set up, the functions of the regional

language will be expanded to cover items (*i*), (*ii*) and (*iv*) and perhaps also at a later date item (*iii*). Of the rest, the needs of items (*vi*) to (*viii*) and also of item (*iii*) (until the regional language is in a position to handle this) can be met only by an international language such as English, which will therefore continue to serve these needs as hitherto.

We are thus left with the single item (*v*) *viz.*,

> the language of administration at the Centre and the medium of communication between the Centre and the States and between the States themselves

as the sole function to be served by the 'official language', and it is for us to consider, in an atmosphere free of irrational prejudices and false sentiment, which language will serve best this limited—indeed extremely limited—objective.

Without going into the intrinsic merits or demerits of any language, let us confine ourselves to the question whether either of the two languages which every Indian citizen must of necessity learn to serve the needs specified under (*i*) to (*iv*) and (*vi*) to (*viii*), *viz.*, the regional language and English, cannot also serve as the 'official language' for the purpose of item (*v*) and whether there is any compelling need to resort to a third language for this limited purpose. Leaving aside for the moment the question of restricting the number of official languages, there can be no objection on *a priori* grounds to either or both the regional language and English becoming 'official languages'. Nor is it possible to make out a valid case for the introduction of a third language merely for the extremely limited purpose of serving item No. (*v*). In a country like India, with miserably low standards of literacy and education, the study of even two languages will constitute a severe handicap but the imposition of an additional third language will surely be an unbearable and unjustifiable burden.

The ideal solution would, of course, be to adopt all the principal languages spoken in India as 'official languages' of the Centre. We have already seen how other multilingual states like Canada, South Africa, Belgium, Switzerland and nearer home Ceylon and Pakistan have adopted this obvious solution; the last named country attempted to force a single language as the 'official language' but the experiment proved disastrous and was promptly abandoned.

There is, however, one weighty objection to the adoption of all the principal languages of India as 'official languages' and that is their large number, *viz.*, fourteen. The practical difficulties of adopting as many as fourteen as 'official languages', especially in the present stage of our economic and social development when there are so many more pressing problems awaiting solution, may prove well nigh insuperable. We have therefore to agree, howsoever reluctuntly, to restricting the number of official languages. However, once we concede this, we have also to reconcile ourselves to the natural corollary that the 'official language' (or languages) of the Union of India will not be understood or spoken by large sections of the people, a defect which, it must be admitted, detracts from the full effectiveness of democracy.

In deciding this or similar questions, it is as well to remember that India is a vast sub-continent with a population of over 340 millions and it would show a total lack of statesmanship to think merely in terms of majority and minority, where the interests of large groups of this magnitude are involved. Any attempt to decide the language issue merely by counting heads or by agreement among political caucuses is bound to have untoward results, as happened in Pakistan.

Having come to the conclusion that the number of 'official languages' has for practical considerations to be restricted, and having found that either of the two lan-

guages, which the people of every State have of necessity to learn, *viz.*, the regional language and English, can well serve as the 'official language', we are left with English as the only language which would meet all the requirements of the case, in other words, as the Hobson's choice for 'official language'. English is already in the field as the *de facto* 'official language' at present and a decision in favour of English creates no fresh problems to tackle. It would also avoid the inevitable discrimination which the choice of any one of the fourteen languages would necessarily involve. It may be argued that no other country has adopted a foreign tongue as its 'official language' but let us not forget that we are trying the unique experiment of uniting 10 or more nationalities with as many languages, into a single nation, a colossal experiment which at no time in the history of the world has been conducted with any measure of success.

There is of course the sentimental objection against English being the 'official language' on the ground that it is a foreign tongue but, in a purely historical sense, all the main non-Dravidian languages in India trace their genealogy to what is known as the 'Indo-European group of languages' and in that sense they are as much foreign to the indigenous peoples of India as English, the only difference being that, in point of time, the former languages have been in India much longer and have been adopted by larger numbers of people as their mother tongue. Further, English is fast shedding its strangeness as a foreign language in most countries of the world on account of the diverse international functions it performs to-day and it would be as unreasonable to reject English on the sole ground that it is not a native language as it would be to reject the political, economic, scientific, technological and cultural knowledge that we have imbibed and are continuing to imbibe from the rest of the world, on the ground that such knowledge is derived not from native but from foreign sources. One has to weigh the enormous advan-

tages to be derived by adopting English as the official language against mere sentimental prejudices. It would be appropriate here to recall what Mr. Hanumanthiah, the Chief Minister of Mysore and a distinguished Congressman, said in Madras on September 18, 1954. He said :

> "After all, what we want is knowledge, enlightenment and liberalization of our minds and outlook. What does it matter therefore, which language can get us these benefits ? And English—without prejudice to other languages—is one of the languages that can bestow these benefits on us.
>
> "Space has been annihilated by the ingenuity of man. We are all passing towards what is called a One World State. Even some of our political parties have that idea not only for the purpose of forging a common language but also for establishing what is called 'World Peace.' One World government or State is the ultimate idea. In that idea English language itself becomes an important element. Now as we carry on through the medium of English, we do not think in terms of Telugu, Kannada or Tamil. We are made to think instinctively as Indians first and last, and to go a step further and that is the core of the philosophy imbedded in our Sanskrit texts also—we should treat the whole world as a family. If we develop that outlook, we will also develop the spirit of tolerance towards the English language."

However, if, in spite of all these weighty reasons that compel the adoption of English, it is decided to yield to the sentimental antogonism towards English, the only reasonable and practicable solution appears to be to adopt as 'official languages' :

1. a representative of the Sanskritic languages of the north ;
2. a representative of the Dravidian languages of the south ; and
3. English, at any rate during a transitional period when the above languages qualify themselves to discharge all the functions which English now discharges ;

with the condition that all officials at the Centre should have a good working knowledge, in addition to their own mother tongue, of at least one 'official language' different from their mother tongue. This will enable those who have a conscientious objection to the use of English to dispense with it as soon as the other 'official languages' are competent to carry out fully the functions allotted to them. No one will then be under compulsion to learn more than one language in addition to his mother tongue to meet all his linguistic requirements.

Compared with Switzerland, a country with a much smaller population but with three 'official languages', a similar number cannot be considered as too many for the sub-continent of India. This is a simple solution which meets all points of view, rational as well as sentimental, and at the same time provides for the contingency of English being retained permanently as one of the 'official languages', should the passage of time assuage the acerbity of feelings against English and render such a course more acceptable than it is now. If there is a spirit of mutual give and take and the people speaking one regional language extend to people speaking other languages the rights and privileges they claim for their own, the solution that is suggested is capable of immediate acceptance and the language problem will once and for all be solved to the satisfaction of everyone concerned, except those few who hanker for a special privilege or status for their own tongue.

Undoubtedly, in the emotionally surcharged atmosphere of to-day, the task is no easy one and leaders in this country are faced with an unpleasant and thankless duty, but equally the responsibility of those who have to take a decision on such matters is great and any false or thoughtless step may cause untold havoc to the country and its peoples for generations to come. The sooner therefore the issue is taken out of the arena of party politics and treated as a human problem to be studied at a lingu-

istic or scientific level, the greater is the possibility of a permanent solution being arrived at to the satisfaction of all genuine lovers of the country and in the best interests of national welfare.

We cannot conclude this discussion better than by quoting the advice which Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of the Nation, offered to Pandit Nehru, when the latter was assailed by doubts :

> "I will give you a talisman. Whenever you are in doubt, or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test. Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man whom you may have seen, and ask yourself, if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to *him*. Will he gain anything by it ? Will it restore him to a control over his own life and destiny ? In other words, will it lead to Swaraj for the hungry and spiritually starving millions ?
>
> Then you will find your doubt and yourself melting away."

Kurinjci

By

P. L. SAMY, B.SC

The ancient Tamils classified the land into four conventional regions. They are, 'Kurinjci', 'Mullai', 'Marutham' and 'Neythal'. 'Kurinjci' refers to the hills and rocky regions, and 'Mullai' to the jungles and grassy regions. 'Marutham' is the irrigated and cultivated lands. 'Neythal' refers to the coastal tracts. Though they seem to be conventional, a study of the plants that are usually ascribed to these regions reveal that these regions are typical habitats of a few at least of the plants and animals. For example, the plant *Calophyllum Inophyllum* (Punnai) and *Ipomea Biloba* (At: umbu) are usually found near the sea-shore and they are invariably described in poems which are found under the classification of 'Neythal Thinai'. All mangrove plants (plants suited for sea-shore regions) are accurately mentioned in 'Neythal'. So also Xerophytic plants (those adapted to hot and desert regions) are described under 'Pa: lai Thin: ai' which refers to the regions which are dry and rainless with scrub jungles.

In order to understand fully ancient Tamil poetry, one has to get a full understanding of the classification under which ancient Cangkam poetry is found. The word 'Thinai' is very comprehensive and all-inclusive, denoting the important cultural features of ancient Tamils. The Tamil grammarians explained the meaning of it under three heads called 'Muthal Porul: ', 'Karu Porul: ' and 'Uri Porul: '. Under 'Muthal Porul: ' come the different regions and seasons of Tamil Nad. The flora and fauna found in these regions come under 'Karu Porul: '; 'Uri-porul: ' means particular episodes in a man's love life, psychologically and idealistically ascribed to the particular regions. For example the meeting of the lovers is always ascribed to 'Kurinjci', the mountain and mountainous

regions. The separation of lovers is associated with semi-desert regions and hot summer.

The word ‘ Kurinjci ’ originally meant the flowers of a group of shrubs called Strobilanthes. Then it came to denote the ‘ Thinai ’ under the three heads. Though Tamilnad cannot boast of high mountains like the Alps and Himalayas, yet it has got the eastern and the western ghats. In poems classified under ‘ Kurinjci ’ we can have a glimpse of the food-gathering civilisation of our ancestors. The people of these regions are said to collect the roots and honey and barter them for rice and other foodstuffs of the plains. Though the civilisation portrayed in these poems is of the food-gathering type, it does not necessarily mean the people lived in that stage of civilisation during the third Cangkam period. Poetry by the time of third Cangkam became highly conventionalised and rigid. The same conventional, idealistic, sometimes artificial, stereotype situations, descriptions and similes are often repeated, but the treatment is often refreshingly free. Probably the third Cangkam poetry represents the declining stage of an epoch in ancient Tamil literature. It would have taken hundreds of years to become so conventionalised, solidified and rigid. Poetry after the third Cangkam continued to draw inspiration from Cangkam poetry and imitated it without originality. It had its *rigor mortis* due to too much rigidity and artificiality. Then the Kavya period and Bhakthi cult in Tamil Poetry started. The Cangkam poets usually had a keen eye for accurate observation, what modern biologists would term as the ecology of natural scene, of which Crabbe is a past master in English literature.

The realistic treatment of nature found in *Akanha:nu:tu, Kutunhthokai* and *Nhattin:ai* is absent in later works. Direct observation is found less and less while convention rules the roast in later poetry. The plants are not treated in those earlier works in an idealistic and conventionalised manner. They strictly belong to the different natural regions. *Kurinjci Pa:ttu* is a long poem, sung by Kapilar, on ‘ Kurinjci Thin: ai ’. In this work as well as in a

grammar called *Itayana:r Akapporul:*, almost all the important plants in nature in different regions are grouped in one and the same mountainous region. Such artificial grouping of plants is not found in the earlier works of the Cangkam period. Tamil grammarians explain such artificiality as 'Thain: ai-mayakkam', but it is really doubtful whether such a thing was meant by the ancient Tamil grammarians. Such confusion of plants in nature can never be thought of. It is difficult to think that one can find mangrove plants associated with the mountainous regions as Kapilar would have it in *Kurinjcippa:ttu.* The high altitude plants can never without mistake be described as belonging to the other regions. Though later commentators tried to give examples of the inter-change of plants in different regions from earlier Cankam poetry, they were not on the whole successful. Nhaccina: rkkiniar, the celebrated commentator of *Tholka:ppiyam,* cannot give indisputable examples for 'Thin: ai-mayakkam' and in the few examples from poetry he gives, he twists the meaning to serve his purpose. As *Kurinjci Pa:ttu* was composed to teach a form of Tamil literature as a grammar to a northern king, Kapilar probably took liberties in the description of plants. Such assemblage of all the beautiful plants in 'Kurinjci' was merely made to impress the pupil with the beauty of the lovers' place of tryst. The description of the place of tryst in *Kurinjci Pa:ttu* and *Itayana:r Akapporul:* recall to one's mind Baudelaire's invocation to an ideal place, where all is beauty, where all is order—and why not—*volupto.* Even the trees and the creepers seems to be there by order. Later poets went one better than Kapilar in having artificial hills and man-made gardens as the place of the lovers' meeting. Description of the lovers' idyllic place of meeting abounds in Cangkam as well as later literature. Shakespeare's sweetest scene is devoted to the idyllic forest of Arden. Modern psychologists would even see in such descriptions of idyllic forests and gardens primordial images of Paradise stored in the racial memory.

The main theme of *Kurinjcippattu* is the meeting of lovers. Nature in the mountainous and forest regions is well suited for such secret meetings of the lovers. Besides, as the commentator explains, the beauty of the woods is such as to make even an ascetic think of love. In one of the stories of Guy de Maupassant, an old couple are brought before the judge on a charge of misbehaviour near the woods. The judge takes a lenient view and dismisses the case saying that in winter the woods are dangerous. Love has a natural scope in the woody and hilly regions and also in the winter season. Has not Shakespeare said in *Twelfth Night* that " Love thoughts lie rich when canopied with bowers " ? Among the seasons winter was ascribed to ' Kurinjci '. A study of psychology made the ancient Tamil poets associate the meeting of the lovers with the mountainous and forest regions and the winter season.

According to Tamil literature lovers like midnight and the small hours for their meetings. Descriptions of nature in Caṇgkam poetry are strikingly beautiful ; The lover is coming in the midnight. The dogs begin to bark. The birds nestle in their nests. The bright moon comes out of the clouds shedding its cool rays on the world. A stray cock mistaking the hour for early dawn, begins to crow. Owls make strange screeching noises. To the lover all these natural phenomena are obstacles to his meeting. All the " wakeful influences " of R. L. Stevenson are obstacles to the lovers' meetings. In *Tholka:ppiyam,* the most ancient Tamil grammar now extant, the rising of the moon and the barking of the dogs are mentioned as some of the obstacles. In some of the poems (*Akam* 5.), we see the lover complaining against the barking of the dogs in the midnight and the moon coming out of the clouds. R. L. Stevenson mentions in his book, *Travels with a Donkey,* the barking of the dogs and the crowing of the cock in the midnight. Poets and novelists seem to be very fond of this phenomenon of the barking of the dogs in the midnight. The dogs barking in the midnight is a common occurrence not only in the villages of Tamilnad but all over

the world. Maurice de Guerin, the French Poet, when describing a French village in Brittany, says that hardly a sound comes from the villages except the barking of the dogs till far into the midnight. A striking similarity to the Cankam poem detailing the obstacles to the lovers' meeting can be seen in one of the love songs of the tribes of Maikal hills in Central India :

> At midnight the dogs are barking
> The stars have come into the sky
> Long are the leaves of the young bamboos
> And breaking through them comes my thief
> At midnight the dogs are barking.
>
> —*Love Songs of Maikal Hills*—
> By Verrier Elwin and Shamrao Hivale.

Here in the simple song of the unsophisticated tribes of Maikal hills, the phenomenon of the dogs barking in the midnight is mentioned twice and, as is usual in Cangkam poetry, the lover is lovingly called a thief. It may be conjectured that Cangkam poems though much sophisticated had their origins in such simple love songs. In one of the novels of Alexander Kuprin, a Russian Novelist, the suicide of a university student at midnight is described. During his indecision and hesitancy, he hears the dogs barking from the Moscow suburbs. The student speaks to himself four or five times about the dogs barking and shoots himself.

Dr. Verrier Elwin, the eminent anthropologist, says that the Baigas of Chota Nagpur, celebrate the festival for bees once in every nine years, when certain Strobilanthes group of plants bear flowers gregariously and attract swarms of bees. The Baigas celebrate the ceremonial eating of the wild honey at the end of the festival. The shrubs which they call ' Mohate ' and ' Amhere ' flower and the bees make a great deal of honey. The Baigas also have a legend for the bee festival. At the end of the festival the men return from the forest with baskets of honey and they dance round the fire with the branches of Strobilanthes tied to their loins. I am indebted to Dr. Verrier Elwin for the above information. The ancient Tamils were very much interested in this plant, Strobilanthes. The word

'Kurinjci' took its name after the name of the flower of the plant. In *Kutunhthokai, Nhattin:ai, Akanha:-nu:tu* and other Cangkam works, there are many references to this plant. *Putam* 374 mentions mountains clothed with black stalk Strobilanthes. That the flower has got lot of nectar and is specially liked by the insects was well-known to the ancient Tamil poets. They also noted the numerous shieldlike honeycombs that were found during the flowering season of these plants. The Tamils considered the honey of this plant the sweetest of all honey got in the forest. The present day Baigas and the ancient Tamils have noted the flowering of this strange plant and the glut of honeycombs during its flowering time. This shows that the tribal people should have had some sort of intercourse with the ancient Tamils. The Todas of Nilgiris even now calculate the age of their children by reckoning the flowering of this plant. The primitive Tamils calculated the years by the flowering of the tree called 'Vengai'. The Gazetteer of the Nilgiris also mentions the strange plant flowering every twelfth year.

According to botanists, the Strobilanthes is a conspicuous undergrowth of mountainous regions. It flowers after about nine years and continues flowering till the twelfth year and then dies. There are several species of this plant in South India and Ceylon. They are found 6,000 feet above sea level in the Western Ghats, the Nilgris, Kodaikanal and the Palni Hills. As the plant is found only in the mountainous regions and as it seems to be very strange and peculiar, the ancient Tamils aptly and ingeniously named the mountainous regions and its civilisation by the name of the flower. The other regions are also named after the flowers of the different plants peculiar to the different regions. No commentator can take refuge under 'Thin;ai-mayakkam' and say that Strobilanthes can be ascribed with accuracy to the other regions. Strobilanthes in nature can never be found in other regions. 'Thin: ai-mayakkam' as applied to many plants and even some animals can never be correct.

There are four well-known species of Strobilanthes in South India i.e., Strobilanthes caudatus, Strobilanthes anceps, and Strobilanthes kunthianus. Strobilanthes amabilois and kunthianus grow on the eastern side of the Nilgris. The Tamils even distinguished a few of the species by the colour of the flowers. Many Cangkam poems mention particularly the black stalk of the flower (*Kutunhthokai* 3, *Akanha:nu:tu* 308 and *Putam* 374). The Tamils named the different 'ra:kas' under 'Kurinjci Pan:' (a tune peculiar to the mountainous regions) by the different colours of the flowers of this plant. One 'ra:ka' was called 'Me:ka Ra:ka Kurinjci', as the flower of one kind of Strobilanthes had grey flowers. Another 'ra:ka' was called 'Viya:ba Kurinjci' as the flower was of bright red colour. One later poem compares the colour of the 'Kurinjci' flower to that of 'kumkum' (a red powder used for adornment by women), 'Ponvan:n:a Kurinjci' probably refers to the yellow colour of yet another species. This shows that the Tamils psychologically associated certain colours with certain tunes and melodies. In the name of the well-known 'ra:ka' called 'Ni:la:mpuri' there is the association of blue colour. This 'ra:ka' was formerly called 'Sathari' which also means blue. The Tamils seem to have had some sort of notion about 'colour-music'. Certain colours are associated with the music of certain well-known musicians like Bach, Mozart, Beethoven and others in western countries.

It is realiably learnt that the gregarious flowering of the Strobilanthes has already started in Kodaikanal and the Nilgiris. It was seen to flower in 1910, 1922, 1934 and 1946.

Some of the love songs of Maikal hills have strange, significant echoes in the love songs of the Cangkam literature. The imagery and nature description in these poems and songs have something in common which one cannot fail to note. Some of the customs and ideas of the tribal people have their counterpart in Cangkam poems. There must have been some connection between some of the hill tribes

of other parts of India and Tamil people in ancient times. This is a field of research which is sure to yield good results. Though nothing can be said about the cultural intercourse of these tribes with the ancient Tamils one cannot fail to notice the striking similarity of their customs and songs with those of the ancient Tamils. Incidentally such a comparative study of the songs, customs and practices of the tribes will be helpful in finding out whether the Tamils came from the North or spread out from the South. Here is a field of research which scholars should pursue with profit.

For the benefit of botanists and those interested in botany I am here giving a scientific description of the plant from an authority on systematic botany.

STROBILANTHES :

SHRUBS, undershrubs or herbs, often gregarious and only flowering after a period of nine years and then dying off. LEAVES opposite, often unequal, toothed or subentire, usually lineolate with raphides as are the bracts and other green parts. FLOWERS capitate or in strobilate or interrupted bracteate spikes or panicled, sessile or sometimes pedicelled, usually with 1 floral bract and 2 bracteoles. CALYX usually deeply 5-partite, the lobes narrow, subequal or one longer, rarely 2-lipped. COROLLA usually white blue or purple, rather large, straight or curved, the upper part ventricose, the lower cylindric ; lobes 5, rounded or ovate, twisted to the left in bud. STAMENS 2 or, more usually, 4 didynamous ; filaments monadelphous, the bases combined in a sheath more or less adherent at the middle of the corolla, the margins free ; anthers oblong, muticous, 2-celled. DISK small or as a stalk to the ovary. OVARY 2-celled, ovules 2 in each cell ; style linear ; stigma of one branch, linear the other suppressed or a mere point. FRUIT a 2- or 4- seeded capsule, the placentas sometimes separating elastically. SEEDS much compressed, glabrous or hairy on strong curved retinacula.

Bharathi's Youth (1882-1904)

KAMIL ZVELEBIL, PH.D., PRAGUE.

The southernmost part of the Indian peninsula is occupied by the district of Tirunelveli the very heart of Tamilnad ; it lies at the eastern foot of the sacred Podiyil hill—on its slopes the Tamil language is said to have been born. And not far from this part of the Tamil country lies the famous Madurai, the cradle of Tamil civilization.

The district of Tirunelveli is a big plain, sloping gradually to the east, cut by shallow river-beds which are fed by periodical freshes and floods. The surface of the soil is covered by a thin layer of crumbling quartz and reddish earth; yellowish and rusty dust gives the characteristic tinge to the whole nature here. Of all the thirty-four rivers, which spring in the mountains in the north-west, clothed in evergreen forest, only Tamiraparuni, and Sitraru keep water constantly, being fed both by south-west and north-east monsoons.

Along the sea-coast run coral reefs ; on the arid shore and its dunes *(தேரி)* grow palmyra palms ; shallow waters, small lakes and back-waters near the coast are used as salt-marshes. The country lying to the north of the Gulf of Mannar is a sort of arid steppe or heath ; flat, sandy, salt, whitish or reddish ground is covered by bushes, palmyras, in places by patches of plantains, or banana trees, irrigated from wells, strewn here and there with herds of cattle and buffaloes and flocks of sheep. This arid country has for long been a typical emigration territory.[1]

The history of this country is unusually rich and varied. Politically it had belonged, incidentally, either to the neighbouring Tiruvidangur State or to the Pandiyan Kingdom (up till 1064, when the Pandiyans were beaten by the great Rajendra Choladeva). After Muslim invasion in 1310-11

1. In 1878-79 only, 34,083 emigrants left Tirunelveli District for Ceylon.

a restoration of the Pandiyas took place. But nearly for four hundred years the country was subjected to terrible anarchy and suffering, brought incidentally by Muslim adventurers, pretenders to the Pandiyan throne and Telugu Nayakkas. Since 1774 the territory was ruled by 'independent' poligars, appointed mostly by the Nawab of Arcot. In 1801 the British made the best use of anarchy and confusion and occupied the whole territory.

At the time of Bharathi's birth the district had 1,700,000 inhabitants in 39 towns and 1,458 villages (86% Hindus, 8% Christians and 5% Muslims). Over 50% of the whole population were tillers. 16%, the Nadars, lived by the toddy-tapping and jaggery-making industry. There were about 9% of Paraiyar[2], 6% of Idaiyar (herds-men), 4% of craftsmen and 4% of Brahmans. There was only 1% of Chettis (traders). The tillers cultivated rice (about 30%), sesamum)*sesamum indicum*), ragi (*Eleusine corocana*), castor-plant, betel, coriander, spiked millet (*Pennisetum typhoideum*), cholam *Sorghum vulgare*), bananas, red-pepper, tobacco, coffee (rarely), coconuts and mangoes (on river banks). 15% of cultivated land is occupied by cotton, especially round Kovilpatti not far from our poet's birth-place.

At the time of Bharathi's birth, 60% of all inhabitants lived under ryotwari system, 29% of the soil belonged to the Zamindars and 8% was inam-land. Those 1,446 sq. miles of zamindari-land were divided among 19 landlords; one of the wealthiest of them was the raja of Ettayapuram, who has been paying yearly £8,836 fixed revenue.

Ettayapuram in the Ottapidaram taluk of Tirunelveli District was, in fact, in Bharathi's time, a small "kingdom" for and in itself. In 1,878, 349 villages with 126,660 inhabitants belonged to the zamindar, whose revenue was 28,781 pounds yearly. In addition to the

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2. Often mentioned in Bharathi's prose and poems together with the Pallar. (பள்ளர்)

tillers, there lived many Nadars there who made their living out of the 70 thousand palmyras growing in this samasthanam.

Now, Bharathi's life begins like a fairly-tale. . . . .

In this Tirunelveli country, in the land of palmyras, rice and cotton—and of the southern dialects of Tamil—there lived a devout Saivite Brahman by name of Suppaiyar with his wife Baghiradiyammal, childless and lonely for a long time. After much penance and many vows a daughter was born unto them, by name of Kuppammal and then a son Sinnachami, the father of our poet. The daughter was safely married, the son educated in the good old traditional way.

Sinnachami Aiyar, learned deeply in Sanskrit and Tamil, in astrology, medicine and other traditional sciences and art—but having also a fair knowledge of English—won the first place at the 'court' of Ettayapuram. The then 'ruling' zamindar (he called himself maharaja or samasthanadhipati) gave assistance to traditional learning and education which was a medley of admirable formal knowledge and exceedingly well-trained memory, very minute and very uncritical knowledge of Tamil and Sanskrit literature, a hotch-potch of astrological, ayurvedic and linguistic as well as religious and philosophical ideas, of enlightenment and superstitions. This was the atmosphere, in which Bharathi was living as a small boy and as a promising youth.

At the Ettayapuram samasthanam—this body of sycophantic panegyrists was called a rajasabha—the survivals of defenerate, oriental despotism had joined with typical marks of landlordish capitalism. According to Bharathi himself, this mixture produced an atmosphere of "a cage" and "a drowsy kingdom". The poet describes landlords in several places of his works and undoubtedly the basis of these descriptions has been formed by his re-

collections of his green years, spent in Ettayapuram. So, for example, he writes in his Essays (கட்டுரைகள்) p. 373 : "In the above said Ettayapuram there lives also a zamindar. He is now about thirty or thirty-five years of age. He is handsome to look at—not unlike a ripe, pinkish lemon. You recognize in his appearance and in his behaviour English education at once. Nay, his habits remain one of a poligar from old times . . . He loves horse-races and huntings dearly ; he keeps four hundred pointers . . . In that palace of his he has twelve wives, wedded unto him according to law—and besides a train of mistresses . . . The said zamindar is also a great devotee of Shiva ; he uses most abundantly ashes of cow-dung and rosary of nuts . . ."[3]

The poet's father, as already said, became one of the first savants in the rajasabha of the zamindar. This wonderful man—though an orthodox Saivite and Brahman—was strongly influenced by the storm of his times and some of his keen ideas were both modern and surprising ; he spent his time in attempts to carry out his plans of industrialization of backward tracts of Southern India and in strong efforts to propagate modern technical and machine-work methods in handicraft and agriculture.

Sinnachami Aiyar married the daughter of his maternal uncle, Lakshmi. On the 11th December, 1882, a son was born unto them in Ettayapuram, whom they called Subrahmanya.

The eighties of the last century were for India a time of social, political and cultural revolution, the time, when the third period of modern Indian history began—the era of monopolist financial capitalism. The era of commercial capitalism, the characteristic feature of which was forced import of English products, came to its end during that time.

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3. I am informed that Bharathi has described a zamindar samasthanam in a brilliant manner in his *Chinnachankaran kathai*. Unfortunately I have not been able to use this text for my study.

About the year 1800 roughly half of all Indians had been living by agriculture, the other half had been spending its time in handloom industry, wood-carving, dye-work, metal-engraving and other handicrafts. At the beginning of our century nearly two thirds of India's population lived by agriculture. The end of the nineteenth century is thus a period of further decline of Indian home-industry. At the same time it is the period of permanent crisis in agriculture in the form of repeated famines. There are three main reasons for this crisis : the constant move of the people from towns to the country, primitive agricultural methods and the indebtedness of the peasants, growing from generation to generation. The gulf between the landlord on the one side and the small farmer on the other deepens very considerably. The tendency towards industrialization appears simultaneously with the tendency to do away definitely with small Indian home-industry. In 1900, already more than a million of Indians worked in factories ruled by modern capitalist methods—especially textile-works and indigo producing factories. This development was recognized and felt by Bharathi, and, what more, it has been rightly analyzed by him in one of his essays.[4]

Politically this was the period when the last phase of the Indian National Movement was started. The American fight for Independence, the French Revolution and the ideas and ways of Western European parliamentary democracies are some of the sources of the democratic and national movement in India in the nineteenth century. Not a few places in Bharathi's work reveal deep influence of Garibaldi's and Mazzini's writings. But, at the same time, the Indian fight for freedom roots deeply in native soil ; it unfolds from the inner social and political relations in India itself.

The English established Western education in India. This education has become the means and channel through which Indian intelligentsia comes into contact with demo-

4. 'தொழிலாளர்' Essays, p. 592.

cratic ideas of the West, with the works of Shelley, Byron, Thoreau, Emerson, Whitman and those of Mazzini, Garibaldi, Tolstoy, Chekhov and Gorky, to name only authors cited in Bharathi's works. The progressive role played by the British raj in India—the deep and bold reforms, abolishing of *suttee, thugee* etc., led by such splendid men as Sir Henry Lawrence—ceases to be progressive gradually in the last years of the nineteenth century and, at the same time, new forces rise in Indian society, represented by young, greedy native bourgeoisie and the new, educated middle-class of lawyers, doctors, journalists, teachers and administrators. In the year 1882—the year of our poet's birth—first symptoms of fight between the old British and the young Indian bourgeoisie, full of progressive ideas of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, appear in the well-known request of Lancashire weavers to abolish import duties, as a result of their feeling anxious about the growth of Indian textile industry. As another instance of new Indian undertaking we may mention the founding of Swadeshi Shipping Company by a friend of our poet, the Tamil hero, V.O. Chidambaram Pillai, in 1908.

In those years, stir and commotion appear also among the masses of the Indian people. The evolution of the national movement was not, of course, equal in all parts of the land. The most progressive and awakened territory was Bengal, ready to fight. The southernmost parts of India, where Bharathi was born, had been more conservative. South India was a country without industry, the prevailing system of agriculture being ryotwari,—not so cruel and exploiting a system as Zamindari. There has been, also, in South India a strong and influential class of Brahmans, and the role played by religion has been very strong. Another important fact was that the Indian revolt in 1857 was nearly without any reaction in South India. Although the southern parts of India had been for long the scene of early colonial conquests, it was Bengal where the actual history of British occupation and rule began. Calcutta was the administrative, commercial and cultural

centre of British India. And here also, in 1885, three years after our poet's birth, the Indian National Congress was founded.

And the cultural and literary development of the country has been very unequal, too. Whereas in Bengal the literary and cultural renaissance was fully flourishing, in Southern India the educated only began to contact Western thought, the literary products of Europe and America, the political ideas of bourgeois revolution and parliamentary democracy. Tamil literature had been captivated by old, traditional, sterile and unproductive themes. Since Father C. J. Beschi's *Paramartha Kuruvin Kathai*, there had appeared no really valuable piece of good Tamil prose. Tamil authors had been going on composing their stale poetry according to old prescriptions. The literature was not at all quite so " excellent " as K. S. Ramaswami Sastri says in his book, *A Primer . . . . , Madras, 1953.* And Bharathi felt it and fought against it :

> மறைவாக நமக்குள்ளே பழங்கதைகள் சொல்வதிலோர்
> மகிமையில்லை
>
> There is no use in boasting among ourselves in private about past glories.

The author quoted says rightly in his book (p. 118) : " . . . there is (sc. in the nineteenth century) a clash between the ancient and the modern cultures. It cannot be said that the century discloses any remarkable literary achievement . . . What we see in the nineteenth century is a crop of Puranas and Stotras in the old styles, and a crop of translations of western works . . . " In the second half of that century several more influential authors appear and their common feature is the love for the past ; they do not or will not see the painful problems of the present. We shall show only a typical example of the work of such authors. It is the " drama " *Manonmaniyam* (1891) by P. Sundaram Pillai, Professor of Philosophy ; the author says himself in the introduction : " The play here submitted, it is needless to say, is meant for the study room and

not the stage . . . The plot of the play is based on one of Lord Lytton's *Last Tales of Miletus* . . ." The author had to write a commentary on his own play, and he asks the reader to be "provided with a good Tamil dictionary" to be able to read it. Well, it was an attempt to create Tamil drama, and to incite the reader to study further the literary language. We shall not refer to various writers and poets flourishing in the second half of the nineteenth century. We want to mention only Arumuga Navalar of Jaffna (1823-1879) who designed certainly a more useful pattern for further development by his edition of classical texts. He was the pupil of Percival—and, here we want to stress the fact that it is time to appraise the work done for Tamil and Tamil literature by European missionaries and orientalists. Damodaram Pillai (1832-1901) deserved well of Tamil classical literature by his editing *Tolkappiyam Kalittogai, Virasoliyam* and other ancient works. This meritorious work had been kept up by the late Mahamahopadhyaya Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar, one of the greatest scholars of Tamilnad in recent times.

Conditions enabling Tamil literary evolution to change radically developed not until the very end of the nineteenth century when the Bengali Renaissance culminated in the work of Rabindranath Tagore, when the very bosom of national movement was shaken by inner struggle. Rajam Iyer is a forerunner of Bharathi in the sense that he deals with current and contemporary Tamil life in his novel *Kamalambal Sarittiram.* He combines realism with romance ; and, naturally, it is necessary, according to him, to become reconciled with everything, for whatever happens is for our benefit.

A sort of revolution in the development of Tamil literature and in the whole cultural and political life of Tamilnad is the birth of Tamil Journalism, associated for ever with the name of G. Suppiramaniya Ayyar, the founder of *Swadeshamitran,* a future tribune of Bharathi. *Swadeshamitran,* had been playing in the service of the national

movement, a progressive role in political and literary development of Tamilnad for many years. Only when reading a quotation which says that "the vernacular newspapers of Madras, printed in Tamil and Telugu, are politically unimportant, being still for the most part devoted to religion" vide p. 480, *Imperial Gazetteer of India,* we realize the importance of this daily for South Indian development.

In 1880 two papers were founded by Bal Gangadhar Tilak, the Marathi daily *Kesari* (The Lion) and the English weekly *The Maratha.* The movement in Bengal, Tilak's speeches and writings and *Swadeshamitran* were the three important, native and Indian sources—contemporary, daily sources, of the intoxicating nectar of patriotic and revolutionary ideas for the young poet. Thus we see that at that time, economic, social, political and cultural conditions developed in such a way as to draw the attention of Tamil authors to the future of Mother India.

Bharathi's mother died when the boy was five. His father married again one of his remote relatives by name of Valliyammal to give motherly care and attention to both his children, Suppaiya[5] and his little sister, Bagirathi. This good young woman became Suppaiya's dear and faithful friend, rather than a mother.

The origins of the inner conflicts and contradictions in Bharathi's work are rooted deeply in his very youth. There is, on one side, the atmosphere full of Brahmanic orthodoxy, customs and manners, of classical Tamil and Sanskrit poetry, of sutras and sastras and Puranic tales ; on the other the progressive, courageous ideas of his father, who prefers natural science to traditional knowledge, who regards mathematics as the queen of all knowledge. And he hopes that his son will study deeply this science and then carry out the father's plans of industrialization.

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5. சுப்பையா என்பது பாரதியாருக்கு வீட்டுச் செல்லப்பெயர்.
(Sellammal Bharathi, *Bharathiyar Sarittiram*, p. 6).

There is a nice anecdote told about Bharathi's *Lehrjahre*; his father asked him to go and study mathematics and Suppaiya began to sing words, rhyming with (*Kan:akku*) (கணக்கு) (*pin:akku*) (பிணக்கு) (*van:akku*) (வணக்கு) (*man:akku*) (மணக்கு) etc. This little story—and there are some others very similar—shows a little the future poet's intimate relation to language.

There is another story from the poet's childhood, relating to his talents. It is the well-known episode about a Tamil pandit who had asked the boy to sing a poem on a very special theme: which was done immediately with such ability and perfection that the pandit exclaimed: "Well—they certainly were right to call thee Bharathi". The title of Bharathi (*Tam.* பாரதி *Skt. bharati*), meaning a learned and wise and talentful person, had been conferred upon Suppaiya on some occasion—and under this name the poet then became famous.

His education was irregular. It consisted mainly in reading and memorizing a few great classical authors, especially Kamban, Valluvar and Tayumanavar, and, of course, his father's lessons in mathematics. The work of those three giants of Tamil literature is the most fertile native source of Bharathi's work, especially as regards the form, but, sometimes, also the contents. Kamban's supreme mastery of language, his splendid poetical diction influenced deeply our poet in some passages of his work. In Valluvar's work, Bharathi valued mainly its noble eclecticism, its tolerance and deep ethos. The hymns of Tayumanavar, this late exponent of *bhakti*, and his profound philosophy have influenced to an extent Bharathi's religious ideas and some of his poems in *Vedantappadalkal* and *Thothirappadalkal* as well as most of his songs as regards their form. Says Bharathi himself:

யாமறிந்த புலவரிலே கம்பனைப்போல், வள்ளுவர்போல்,
இளங்கோவைப் போல் பூமிதனில் யாங்கணுமே பிறந்ததில்லை

Nowhere in the world have we known a poet like Kamban or Valluvan or Ilango.

The poet felt great admiration (cf. some of his essays) for the ancient poetess, Auvaiyar, too. His *Puthia A:thicudi* (புதிய ஆத்திசூடி) is composed in imitation of one of her collections. According to his wife, Srimathi Sellammal, Bharathi began to compose verses in his sixth or seventh year.

Bharathi married in June, 1897, when he was fifteen. He married Sellammal, the daughter of Sellappa Aiyar of Kilakkadaiyam in Tirunelveli district. She was seven at that time. The typical Hindu, Brahman marriage rites were very festive and magnificent, lasting four days. In *Bharathiyar Sarittiram,* Srimati Sellammal quotes Bharathi's verses composed on this particular occasion, verses full of naive emotion and ripe knowledge, sounding like an echo of Krishna-Radha songs :

> ....the body melts in its own heat like wax, yet now, O, you sinner, I shall embrace you and fondle, and if you give me a kiss, I shall worship you for ever.

His wife adds that she—a simple, country-girl of seven as she was—had been trembling with shyness and affection.

According to Bharathi himself, his father was "stubborn" and "obstinate" about his industrialization plans. Sinnachami Aiyar had had very modern designs upon his son : he intended to send him to Europe to get acquainted with economic and industrial problems of the West. But before he was able to carry out his plans, he died, just a year after his son's marriage. His property had been consumed entirely by his unrealized experiments. Bharathi's journey to Europe was naturally out of the question. And with the death of his father, Bharathi's continuous struggle for bare existence began, that incessant economic hardship, pressing the poet's whole life.

Bharathi feels himself lonely and helpless without his father (cf. his poems on p. 14 of Srimati Sellammal's *Sarittiram*). He leaves Ettayapuram for Tirunelveli where

he attends for some time from the first to the fifth class, Hindu College. At the same time, he gets acquainted with some foreign authors, mainly with English and American poets. He had nobody who would support him in his studies ,and yet he wants to learn. His wife lives still at her father's house in Kadaiyam, as the consummation-marriage had not yet taken place. His aunt, Kuppammal, the sister of his father, invited him to come and live with her and her husband in Kasi (Banaras). And Bharathi leaves South India for the first time.

During that time of Bharathi's stay in Banaras, Northern India experiences a stormy political development which centres in Bengal and the Punjab. In 1885, the Indian National Congress has been founded, the first and most important organisation of the Indian national movement, an organisation rooted in the activities of the Indian middle class, of the young, and, objectively progressive, Indian bourgeoisie.

From the British point of view, the Congress is, at first, welcome, as a wall against the danger of revolution, as a safety valve of dangerous feelings and ideas. But soon the Congress itself became a place of vehement inner controversies : on one side there were those who, hesitating and irresolute, got as far as collaborating with imperialism against the danger of a mass-movement ; on the other side, some of the Congress leaders really led the people in its national struggle. Bharathi never supported the compromisers in the Congress. He was following—both in his life and works—the radical movement. It is true that he esteemed highly such men as Gokhale—a typical moderate and a representative of compromise and hesitation—but this was honour offered to some indisputable merits these men had in the first phase of the movement, not to their ideas. Bharathi's own political life, his work as a poet and journalist, prove that he appears as a typical spokesman of young, revolutionary, democratic and progressive Indian bourgeoisie of the period which preceded the First World War.

The old school of moderates in the national movement lived only to see soon the break-down of its hopes, the hopes that the British imperialism would be helpful in the solution of some unquestionably progressive tasks—the fight against the caste-system and the development of education. A strong reaction rises against this old school of moderates which absorbed much Western influence, especially the ideas of parliamentary democracy, the school which grows from the Bengal atmosphere of cultural and religious renaissance. This reaction carried the name of "orthodox nationalists", of "left radicals", of "extremists", and there, in the ideas of this school of thought and action root Bharathi's political ideas.

The leaders of this group were, first of all, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, a Brahman from Maharashtra, Lala Lajpat Rai from the Punjab and the two Bengalis, Bepin Chandra Pal and Aurobinda Ghosh. These men—every one of them represents a great magnificent, unique personality—did not agree fully with each other's ideas. Further development of every one of these men proved their deep differencies. Tilak, a real "Lion" of the movement, adheres to it and remains its head until his death. Lajpat Rai devotes his time to the work in the Aryasamaj ; he is called by R. Rolland as one of the most intelligent and splendid men born in modern India. Bepin Chandra Pal, a wild revolutionary and a passionate speaker, lives until 1931 and writes his *Memories.*[6] Aurobinda Ghosh leaves politics already in 1910 to devote his time, in Puducceri, (Pondicherry) to philosophy and religion for more than forty years. These men were united in those years rather by a common conviction that a compromise with imperialism was impossible, and by a common spirit of courage and enthusiasm than by a special doctrine.

6. "Among those who came to us were Bepin Chandra Pal, Lajpat Rai and G. K. Gokhale. We met Bepin Pal in one of our sitting rooms. There were only a dozen of us present but he thundered at us as if he was addressing a mass meeting of ten thousand.... Lalaji spoke to us in more reasonable way and I was impressed by his talk" (J. Nehru, *Autobiography,* p.22.)

During the time when Bharathi studied in Banaras the Extremists gained much influence in the national movement, and attracted " large number of newcomers from the middle classes ", especially young men, but " they did not touch the masses " (Nehru, *Autobiography, p.* 31). We know nothing about the political development of Bharathi in Banaras but it is highly probable that he had been absorbed in digesting a mass of new impressions ; he observes, in this ancient bulwark of orthodoxy, the whole absurdity and nastiness of the caste-system, but, at the same time, he drinks deeply from the divine cup of Sanskrit culture ; he learns North Indian languages, Hindi, Urdu and some Bengali ; he is aware now of the fundamental unity of India. Later he shows the way to realize this unity : through the love of Tamilnad to the love of India ; and through the love of India to the love of the whole of mankind.

Bharathi's uncle, Kirushna Sivan who managed some choultries for South Indian pilgrims in Prayag and Gaya, was an orthodox Saivite and a rich man. Thus it was possible for the youth to devote all his time to learning. But he was not content with the kind of education he got in Banaras. " The whole day there was recitation and memorizing of texts . . . When I went to school in the morning, I did not go in the evening ; sometimes I thought I would go in the afternoon, and, therefore, it would be unnecessary to go in the morning—and then I did not go in the afternoon, either. At school, I usually made fun of the teacher, I cracked jokes in verse and prose and I was teasing my neighbour . . . Another time I would steal away from the class-room so that the teacher could not find out. When I came home, I would sit down on the roof of the house and watch the life on the banks of the Ganga " (Va. Ra. *Mahakavi Baratiyar*, 15). Srimati Sellammal tells us in conformity with these lines that the youth spent his time in composing songs, sitting on the banks of the river or in merry wanderings with some companions in a boat. He did not mind his caste in the least and he associated with

the members of all castes and classes, and, by this behaviour and by neglecting his religious and caste-duties, he provoked "a certain indignation of his uncle". (Srimati Sellammal's *Sarittiram,* p. 16). And so he came to feel deep aversion for the traditional system of education (compare his splendid essays on this question) and so he came into contact with the people, with all its classes and social strata, into contact with that colourful, variegated life on the banks of the Ganga; he had opportunity to become acquainted with the vice of prejudice, with the terrible misery, material and spiritual, of the people of India, with the perseverance and toughness and goodness and cheerfulness of that wonderful people.

The revolt of the youngster showed itself one day in a way which was at the same time boyish and courageous, rash and purposeful when we think of that very orthodox and dignified surroundings and of that uncle of his : he got rid of the orthodox tuft of hair, the so-called *sikha* (குடுமி) this awful deed was a violation of caste and an attempt to fight all orthodoxy. His uncle was full of rage. He reproached the boy, he reminded him of his poor dead father and his old, venerable Saivite descent—but in vain. The youth held out. And so he had to take his meals separately and live in exclusion like an outcast.

After some months, naturally, thanks to the kindness of his good aunt, Kuppammal, uncle and nephew became reconciled.

Visuvanada Sivan, the husband of Srimati Sellammal's elder sister, called the attention of the young wife of Bharathi to the fact that he spends his time in Banaras in such activities as could arouse the dissatisfaction of the authorities. It seems that this information came from Bharathi's uncle ; V. Sivan warned Sellammal, too, that the young man intended to leave his family and devote all his time to the national struggle. And he did not omit to picture all his "eccentricities", either. Sellammal wrote a

letter to her husband, asking anxiously to explain his doings. Bharathi's answer does not help us to find out the exact details of these happenings. He writes :

> Blessings and greetings to my dearest and most beloved Sellammal. I have got your kind letter. I am doing nothing which you ought to follow with such anxiety.... I shall never go on the wrong path ....

Bharathi's studies in Banaras had finished by a pass in the University Entrance Examination of the Allahabad University—and this was also, his highest official qualification. It was the zamindar of Ettayapuram who came to Banaras on his journey to the Delhi Durbar in 1902 and induced Bharathi to return to South India. Then the consummation-marriage took place in accordance with the customary rites.

The following two years (1902-1904) which Bharathi and his wife spent at the Ettayapuram samasthanam are the period of the first great crisis of the poet's life. From the very beginning of the service at the 'raja's' court Bharathi felt the difference of atmosphere : in North India, a revolution had been set in motion and everything had been ripening towards the great year, 1905. In the very heart of the Indian national movement, a crisis was going on, leading to the split at Surat, in 1906. In Bombay, there was B.G. Tilak and the first organized action of Indian workmen, the strike, as a protest against Tilak's imprisonment ; in the Punjab, there were Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh ; Bengal was going to explode soon, but in South India, the atmosphere was comparatively peaceful. And Bharathi was living in a place he himself called " a sleepy kingdom ".

The first ten years of our century witness new forms of exploitation in India. Financial capitalism is more ruthless, more open and more greedy ; at the same time, the crisis of Indian agriculture culminates. The dependence of the Indian people on agriculture grows uninterruptedly and unbearably (in 1891 it is 61:1% of all

inhabitants, in 1921 already 73% whose subsistance depends on the soil). The industrial development of India meets with the open resistance of British industrialists (cf. Val. Chirol in *Observer*, April 2, 1922). Whilst this economic and political development was going on in India, the Ettayapuram samasthanam was one of the places where some feudal survivals of the South Indian middle ages were kept and observed. Bharathi's duties consisted chiefly in his work as librarian ; he had to take care of the raja's books, to work up some foreign journals, to take part in the discussions and disputations of the pundits—the intention of the raja was to create in Ettayapuram a new " Madurai of learning ". Bharathi, however, calls his work " hand-binding service " *(கைகட்டி சேவை)*.

According to Srimati Sellammal, he felt like a " bird in a cage ", he desired very much to take part in public life. He did not want to live " merely on flattery and sycophancy " (*Sarittiram*, p. 27).

There was at least one good quality of the raja—his bounty—which enabled Bharathi to get a lot of books in accordance with his own tastes and wants. His wife tells us that he left sometimes for Madras to do some shopping there and that he came back with heaps of books : side by side with Tamil classics he brought books by English, American and French authors. He liked especially Shelley, Byron and Keats. He was so captured by Shelley that he founded a sort of literary circle which he called ' Shelleyan Guild ' in his native place, and there he used to read and explain the verses of this great bard of liberty to his friends. This period of his life is very important indeed : he tries to quench his thirst for knowledge, he spends hours in trying to solve all sorts of problems, religious, social and political, arising from the contact of Indian society with the outer world. He is deeply interested in the question of marriage, in the position of women in India, in the problems of education, sport, caste-system. When he visits Madras, he gets acquainted with the political and cultural life of a big city,

and realizes painfully the contrast between the revolution going on in the whole of Northern India—and the dull drowsiness and sultry atmosphere of his surroundings in Ettayapuram. He longs after the whirlwind of life in a big town. He travels in his native country of southern Tamilnad, visiting Papavinasam, Kalukumalai, Tirukkutralam and other places, thus coming into contact with the Tamil people and its misery—and its strength.

There were several reasons leading to the final parting of the zamindar and Bharathi. The poet calls the zamindar-administration a " sleepish durbar void of any fundamentals of justice ". The relations between the two men were not free from discords and indignation.

The poet's clear and sensitive mind had to bear patiently the raja's " babble and tittle-tattle " about love and erotics ; he had to witness the zamindar's excursions into aesthetics, his cruelty and impatience with the servants and the " low ", his bountiful debauchery—all those features of Oriental *Verfallsdespotismus* wearied and provoked Bharathi unbearably. And so, at last, the poet left Ettayapuram for ever. This was in 1904. The time of youth was over.

A Brief Survey of the Tamil Press

SM. L. LAKSHMANAN CHETTIAR, B.A.

The inception of the modern press in Tamil dates back to about 1830 when some Christian missionaries came out with a monthly journal from Tranquebar.

THE PIONEER.

The daily newspapers in Tamil—as in the other Indian languages—were an off-shoot of the rise of Indian nationalism. The first Tamil daily—the *Swadesamitran*—was founded by Mr. G. Subramania Iyer, in the last quarter of the 19th century. It was remarkable for its vivid reporting and outspoken leaders, during the freedom struggle. A conservative paper by present-day standards, it has maintained a uniform standard. The late poet Subramanya Barathi was associated with this paper for several years.

Begun as a half-anna paper, the now widely-read *Dinamani* is generaly regarded as the mouthpiece, of the Congress (now ruling) party. It has always been on the winning side politically. It has built up a reputation thanks to the improvement in its services and its enterprising editors. As the editor of *Dinamani* and other dailies, Mr. T. S. Chockalingam dominated Tamil journalism for two decades. His facile pen had colour, charm and distinct individuality.

Dinamani now exchanges news over leased wires with newspapers in different cities, thanks to its link-ups. It has introduced comic strips and curtailed verbatim reports. The following extract from an issue of *Dinamani* will give the reader an idea of the style employed in its leading articles :

ஓயாத தொல்லை

தினமணி 3–3–1955

இலங்கை-இந்தியா உடன்பாட்டினால், இலங்கையிலுள்ள இந்திய வமிசா வழியினர் பிரச்னை லகுவாவதற்குப் பதிலாக நாளுக்கு நாள் அதிக சிக்கலாகி வருகிறது. இதை உணர்ந்து ராஜ்ய சபையில் பல மெம்பர்கள் கேள்வி கேட்டிருப்பது நல்ல அறிகுறி. இந்தியா சர்க்கார் ஒரு அசட்டு நிம்மதியில் ஆழ்ந்து விடாமல் உஷார்ப்படுத்துவதற்கு இத்தகைய அக்கறை அவசியம். நேருஜி அளித்த பதில், கஷ்டப்படும் இலங்கை இந்தியர்களுக்கு திருப்தி யளிக்காது. டில்லி ஒப்பந்தத்தை ஒரு சாக்காகக் காட்டி, புதிய, புதிய வில்லங்கங்களையும் தடைகளையும் தொந்திரவுகளையும் இலங்கை சர்க்கார் சிருஷ்டித்து வருகிறார்கள். அவர்கள் சொல்வது ஒன்று, செய்வது ஒன்றாகி விட்டது. வோட்டுப் பதிவு, உரிமை கடமைகள், பிழைப்பு, முதலியவைபற்றி நடைமுறை உள்ளிட்ட திட்டவட்டமான உடன்படிக்கையை செய்து கொள்ளாததன் விளைவுதான் இன்றைய குழப்பமெல்லாம்.

SCRIPT REFORM.

The *Viduthalai* established with the object of furthering the interests of the Tamils has had a stormy career. In the twenties, it became a power under Justice Party rule. Its founder, Mr. E. V. Ramasamy Naicker, is the pioneer of script-reform. Script, like society, changes with the times. Tamil script—which consists of a huge alphabet of nearly 250 letters—can be cut down to 44. The *Viduthalai* has always published *(லை)* as *(லை)* The *Swadesamitran* followed this up and came out a few years ago with a few columns of matter in the new script.

Founded by an ardent lover of the Tamil language, Mr. Karumuthu Thiyagarajan, the *Tamilnadu* of Madurai is the latest entrant to the field of daily journalism. It maintains a high literary standard. The paper is bound to serve the cause of the Tamil language and the Tamil people in an increasing measure. The extract given below is from a leading article in this paper :

திரைப்படப் பாடல்கள்

தமிழ் நாடு 27–2–1955

இந்தியப் படத் தயாரிப்பாளர்களுடன் முன்னர் செய்து கொண்ட ஒப்பந்தத்தைப் புதுப்பித்து, அப்படத் தயாரிப்பாளர்களின் படங்களிலுள்ள பாடல்களை அனைத்திந்திய வானொலி வாயிலாக மீண்டும் ஒலிபரப்ப மத்திய அரசாங்கம் முடிவு செய்திருப்பது வரவேற்கத்தக்கது. டாக்டர் பி. வி. கேசுகர் மத்திய அமைச்சரவையில் இடம் பெற்றதிலிருந்து, அனைத்திந்திய வானொலியில் திரைப்படப் பாடல்களை ஒலி பரப்புவது பற்றிய அரசாங்கக் கொள்கை மாறுதலடையத் தொடங்கிற்று. "திரைப்பட இசை போன்ற எளிய இசையால் மக்களுக்குப் பயனில்லை. எனவே கர்நாடக இசைக்கே முத லிடம் தரவேண்டும். திரைப்பட இசையை எவ்வளவுக்கு எவ்வளவு புறக்கணிக்க முடியுமோ அவ்வளவுக்கவ்வளவு செய்தால் நல்லது" என்ற கருத்தைக்கொண்ட டாக்டர் கேசுகர் தமது கருத்துக்களைச் சிறிது சிறிதாக நடைமுறை யில் புகுத்தத் தொடங்கினர். இதன் விளைவாக அனைத்திந்திய வானொலியில் ஒலிபரப்பப்படும் திரைப்படப் பாடல்களின் எண்ணிக்கை நாளடைவில் குறைந்து வரலாயிற்று. அரசாங் கம் அத்துடன் நின்றிருந்தால் நன்றாயிருந்திருக்கும். ஆனால் திரைப்படப் பாடல்களை ஒலிபரப்புவது அந்தந்தப் படங் களுக்கு விளம்பரம் தருவது போலாகும் என்று கூறி, அதனால், அப்பாடல்களைப் பயன்படுத்துவதற்குரிய கட்டணம் கொடுக் கப்படுவதை நிறுத்திவிடப் போவதாக அரசாங்கம் அறிவித் தது. இதன் விளைவாக, அரசாங்கத்திற்கும், திரைப்பட உரிமையாளர்களுக்கும் இடையே இருந்துவந்த ஒப்பந்தம் முறிந்தது. அதன் பின்னர், அனைத்திந்திய வானொலி அன்பர் களுக்கு ஏமாற்றமே காத்திருந்தது. எனவே, அவர்களிற் பெரும்பாலோர் நல்ல திரைப்படப் பாடல்களை அடிக்கடி ஒலி பரப்புகின்ற இலங்கை வானொலி போன்றவற்றையே நாட லாயினர்.

INFANT MORTALITY.

Due to financial limitations, lack of managerial ability and other disabilities, dailies which came into existence one after another made a fade-out as fast as they appeared. Of

these, *Tamilnadu* (of Dr. Varadarajalu Naidu), *Lokopakari, Dinasari, Maalaimani* etc., deserve mention. *Navasakthi* and *Desabakthan*—both shortlived—exerted an influence unsurpassed by any of their contemporaries, thanks to the zeal of their distinguished editor, the late Thiru. Vi. Ka. He wrote in chaste Tamil and coined suitable words in Tamil where none existed and he succeeded in making these words familiar to the bulk of the newspaper-reading-public. And this at a time when other papers were using a style like this :

இந்த ரெவொலுயூசனை சக்சஸ்புலாக நடத்தவேணுமென்று இண்டியன் நாசனல் காங்கரஸின் கல்கத்தா செஷனில் சுரந்தரநாத் பானர்ஜி பிரிசிடென்சல் அட்ரசில் சொன்னார்.

Besides *Swadesamitran, Dinamani, Viduthalai* and *Tamilnadu* referred to already, *Bharatadevi, Thanthi, Nam Naadu, Socialist Muslim, Janasakthi,* are all published from Madras. Other Tamil dailies include *Nava India* from Coimbatore, *Thinamalar* from Trivandrum and one from Pondicherry. Tamil dailies published from outside of India are the *Thinakaran* and the *Veerakesari* of Colombo, *Bala Burma* and *Rasika Ranjani* of Rangoon, and *Tamil Nesan, Tamil Murasu, Malaya Nanban, Sevika* and *Muyarchi* from various towns in Malaya. Thus we have in all 21 dailies in Tamil (as against 23 in Malayalam). One Tamil daily has a net sale of 60,000 ; but circulation is no real news use of the number of its readers. It is a common sight in the villages to find one paper shared by nearly a dozen readers.

THE PERIODICAL PRESS.

Before we continue our survey of the Tamil Daily Press, we may take a brief look at the Periodical Press.

A conservative estimate—made by the Bombay Tamil Sangam, which organised an exhibition of Tamil journals in 1949—puts the number of Tamil periodicals in the region of 400.

Dinamani Kadir, a weekly, claimed in July 1950 a record of 130,000 in circulation. This phenomenal growth was due to its bumper size and relative cheapness (2 annas). It has since yielded place to *Kalki.* Kalki now has a circulation larger than that of any other single-edition newspaper publication in India—English or vernacular, daily or weekly. Its late editor, Kalki R. Krishnamurthi, was a fluent writer who successfully exploited his ability to explain difficult and often complicated political problems in simple terms. Reading his articles was a political education to the masses. Another popular weekly, the *Ananda Vikatan* is designed to entertain rather than to inform; it publishes light writing of human angle stories. Most weeklies and monthlies carry short stories, modern fiction and serial novel. The others—the attractively printed *Vindhya* of Bombay, the *Kumarimalar, Sakthi, Amudasurabi* and *Ponni* all of Madras, to mention a few—are quality journals catering to a wide variety of interests. *Kalaikathir* of Coimbatore is a high-class journal devoted mainly to articles of scientific interest and the enthusiasm of its sponsors deserves all praise. Though we do not have any children's daily like the one published by the Mainichi newspapers in Japan, some good children's periodicals like the *Poonjolai* have recently come out and hold good promise for the future. *Nalvali* is a health magazine published by the Oriental Watchman group from Poona. A few literary journals also exist; some digest papers have also come out. Film magazines are legion. Otherwise, there are no trade papers. The technical press is equally conspicuous by its absence. While the need for specialised periodicals exists, their prospects are none too bright. If they are to avoid early death, such papers must be aided by public trusts, foundations, libraries and governmental organisations. Subscribers again will be mostly institutional and not individual.

LOCAL EDITIONS.

To get back to our survey of the daily Press, Mr. Adityan of *Thanthi* made a landmark in South Indian

journalism by bringing out a daily paper from a mofussil centre. *Dinamani* also has come out with a Madurai edition. Reference has already been made to *Tamilnadu* of Madurai and *Nava India* of Coimbatore and other papers. There is a large scope for such dailies, provided they do not become carbon copies of the Madras issues. More local coverage is required. A good local paper keeps the municipality, the Magistrates, the police and the hospitals upto the mark and on their toes, and tells everybody what is going on. In a democracy, news concerning the common man is the staple, not the news relating to the elite or the highbrow.

Some of the handicaps of publishing dailies from places like Madurai and Coimbatore, which are far-removed from the sea-ports, may be enumerated here. The cost of printing is high in the smaller cities. On account of railway freight, the cost of newsprint is higher in the interior cities. Even a small increase in the price of newsprint—say half-an-anna per pound—may convert the profit into a loss. When a lino-type machine goes out of order, it cannot be set right immediately in the smaller towns like Madurai. Pondicherry or Trichy. A technician has to be sent for from Madras. Again, process-engraving and block-making are at a primitive stage of development in the mofussil cities. In the face of such heavy odds, the progress made by dailies in interior cities may be considered as satisfactory.

NEWS CONTENT.

About 50% of the news space of Tamil dailies is foreign. The Tamil dailies do not attempt any objective interpretation in the news pages themselves by the provision of relevant background material and feature articles.

Even for all India and provincial news, the Tamil Press depends on official handouts, news supplied by P.T.I. and other news agencies and syndicates. These are rarely supplemented by exclusive sources. As a result, the reports

are stale and stereo-typed and make dull reading. If the Tamil Press is to survive, they must aim at some local colour and individuality.

As we have already stated, Tamil dailies are by-products of politics and so the bill of fare provided by them relates almost exclusively to political affairs. A shift in news content is apparent recently ; we hope it is a pointer to future trends.

75% of the news is received in the English language ; teleprinter and telegraph messages are conveyed in English ; in a few Tamil dailies, even the leading article is translated from English. Hence translation is the chief pre-occupation of the Tamil Press. Unfortunately transliteration is too frequently resorted to in place of translation. As a result, only people with some knowledge of English are able to follow the Tamil Press intelligently.

No doubt journalists have to produce translations in conditions of hurry and strain. And translations are done by different people, with the result there is no uniformity in the renderings of the translators. "In the first place, it is not merely a knowledge of English that is required of the translator but he should also be a good scholar of the subject which is being translated. . . . The spirit of the subject-matter has to be absorbed by the translator . . . . With the rapidly developing modern literature on technical and scientific subjects, the translator must keep pace with the requirements of modern knowledge."*

Book-reviews are a regular feature in the Tamil dailies ; but the books for review are, almost as a rule, allowed to pile up for several weeks with a hasty distribution at the end. The bulk of the reviewing is done by the staff of the newspapers concerned. News of forthcoming books rarely appear and this is all the more deplorable as there are no publishers' publicity sheets, book trade press etc., in Tamil.

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* Sir A. Ramasamy Mudaliar, in an address to the Secondary School Teachers' Association, Mayuram, on 31st March 1953.

EDITORIAL STAFF.

The editorial staff of the Tamil Press are English educated University products and their mental equipment is high. But, generally speaking, their Tamil education is rather poor. It is essential that editors and publishers of Tamil newspapers should be well-versed in the Tamil language and its literature. The editorial staff should also be in a position to differentiate good Tamil from bad, honest prose from the slipshod, the vulgar and the affected. It is time they realised the need to acquire a wide vocabulary. Words are the tools of their trade; the more words they know and can use correctly and effectively, the better journalists they will be.

Frank Gandlin in his *Teach Yourself Journalism* (English University Press Publication) observes:

> The equipment that the sub-editor must bring to his task includes first and foremost, a complete command of correct English—spelling, punctuation, grammar, sentence-construction, and current idiom. He must command too, a fluent, succinct and forceful style of his own, for he is far from being the butcher of other men's writing that some reporters would have one believe.

Obviously, our Press barons believe that the English qualifications insisted upon by the English papers do not apply to the Tamil language and the Tamil papers! Otherwise, how are we to account for the slipshod style used by them? Grammatical mistakes are the rule, rather than the exception.

Another defect is that the editorial staff is manned by people of homegeneous political views. Modern canons of journalism insist that persons with a wide variety of views should be on the editorial staff to reflect diverse opinions.

It is said of the *Times* of London that the Letters to the Editor column is the most-read part of it. Unfortunately, it is just the other way about with regard to the Tamil Press, for the Cream of Tamil society goes in for the

English-language Press. Very few Tamil newspaper-readers care to write such letters. Perhaps, the Tamil Press can stimulate readers' interest by awarding small prizes for the best letters on different subjects.

SPECLAL DISABILITIES OF THE TAMIL PRESS

The technical equipment of the Tamil Press is rather poor. We know of no Tamil paper using the latest vertical type Rotary Press and multi-colour printer. Nor has any effort been made to provide a course of journalism in Tamil. A beginning could be made by holding a series of seminars.

Very few papers have an up to date reference library. Index Departments, again, are rare.

Mofussil correspondents are very few and most of them untrained. Lack of sufficient office-space, bad lighting, paucity of Tamil typewriters, poor filing system—these are common to most dailies. Telephones are few and consequently, access to news is limited. Competent proof-readers and re-write men are not generally found.

In sending invitations in connection with Press conferences, in allotting and arranging seats at various functions, in constituting committees and Press Commissions, and in the appointment of journalists to Government jobs, the journalists of the Tamil Press have not always received due recognition. Government hand-outs, again, are either in English or in Hindi. The Tamil Press suffers equally in regard to revenue from advertisement, as advertisers usually prefer the English Press.

NEED TO EVOLVE A STANDARD STYLE

Most of the dailies use a simple style but a highly Sanskritised language. There is little attempt to aim at correct Tamil usage. On the other hand, a few literary journals use long and involved sentences ; their qualifying clauses clog and circumlocutions weaken the style. Parenthesis and cumbersome inversions are difficult to read

and more difficult to follow. A standard style suited to journalism has to be evolved. This may be on the pattern of the Italian Press which adopts a kind of half-literary, half-personal style.

A STYLE BOOK* is unknown to the Tamil Press. In the absence of a Style Book, many kinds of errors creep into the dailies, which is regrettable. Hundreds of English and Hindi words are "transplanted" in the Tamil papers, although of course in Tamil characters. A Style Book would discourage such tendencies. It could give instructions to ensure uniformity in spelling, usage etc. It is not uncommon now to find different expressions in one and the same page of some dailies : *e.g.*

கனடா, கானடா
ஐயர், அய்யர்
7-ம் நாள், 7-ஆம் நாள்
ரங்கூன், ரெங்கோன்
நாகரிகம், நாகரீகம்
கொழும்பில், கொழும்புவில்
தனுசுகோடி, தனுஷ்கோடி
நாயுடு, நாயடு

LITERACY DRIVE.

In some South American States, where literacy was poor, prominent newspapers published simple lessons gradually working them up to a complete course lasting four to five months. At the end of the course, they offered readers free gifts of primers. This resulted in the circulation of those papers mounting up considerably. The Tamil newspapers also may follow this example and help eradication of illiteracy and incidentally help themselves.

* STYLE BOOK gives Rules of Composition for the use of editors, copy-holders, operators, and proof-readers. Such books are not for sale, though copies usually may be obtained by persons interested.

CONCLUSION.

To sum up, in circulation and technique of production the Tamil Press, like the Bengali, is far ahead of Hindi and other Indian-language papers. In the last twenty years, the Tamil Press has made big strides. Its contribution to the success of the movement for political freedom is impressive. There is however great scope for improvement and expansion. With increasing literacy, higher standards of life and the impending change over of the State language from English to Tamil, the Tamil Press has bright days ahead. The pioneering spirit which has carried it so far will ensure it a prosperous future.

Some Contacts and Affinities between the Egypto-Minoan and the Indo-(Dravido) Sumerian Culture

H. S. DAVID, B.A. HONS., PH.D. (LOND.)

The area of ancient culture extended from Crete and Libya in the West to Sumer and India in the East : this area was inhabited by the brownish, short, dolichocephalic race, later called " Mediterranean ". Fertile and cultivated in the third and fourth millennia before Christ, this essentially ONE area has been slowly, though steadily, split up into separate regions by the progressive desiccation of the whole region, especially of Arabia. Sir Arthur Evans, in his monumental work : *The Palace of Minos at Knossos,* (Vol. II, pp. 72, 462 to 463), shows how the rich oil-producing district between Visala and Kani Kastelli in Central Crete has now a meagre olive growth, and how the flora and the now dried up Middle Minoan Conduit of Mavrokolybo are unmistakable evidences of greater rainfall than now, in Minoan times. This progressive desiccation of Arabia, like that taking place at the same time in Central Asia, has been advanced as an explanation of that increased nomadism of the Arabs which resulted in the historic and remarkable expansion of Islam in the first century of the Hegira. All over this region, then, from Crete to India the operation of parallel phenomena is noticeable, and the Sacred City appears at the dawn of history as the essential organ of the higher civilisation.

In Egypt, however, the Sacred City, even Heliopolis, is soon over-shadowed by the more Sacred Crown, endowed with superhuman majesty and invoked in the Pyramid texts as a living divinity. As the king's name was ineffable, like that of Jahveh, the God of Israel, among the Jews, the Egyptian king was described by some such circumlocution such as He of the Great House : Per-Aha, which we pro-

nounce Pharaoh. Now, this *Aha* occurs as palace sign, in both Egyptian and Minoan hieroglyphics. (Cf. Evans : op. cit. Vol. I pages 357 to 358). The Dravidian word *Aha,* from the root Ahk—to draw in, to contract, means the house or by metonymy the person in the house, hence " I ". Cf. Tamil and Malayalam : *akam,* Sinhalese *aga,* Sanskrit *aham,* Latin *ego,* Greek *egon,* and Sumerian *egu.* The Egyptian hieroglyphic for *aha* is the picture of a palace.

Per is, of course, *per* or *periya* the great (in Tamil). Hence there is an unmistakable affinity between the Egyptian title and the two Dravidian words, of which it is presumably composed. That such titles are by no means out of date is borne out by the epithet " *La sublime Porte* " given to the Ottoman Sultan. I am aware that certain Egyptologists read *per* as place or house or palace, and *aha* as equivalent to ' great '.

In the same work of Sir Arthur Evans, (Vol. I. Fig. 207 c.2), there is a terrible female face with two hieroglyphic signs above it, one a bent leg and the other a dart or javelin. An obvious explanation that struck me was that the bent leg symbolised *Kal* (=leg) and the dart=i, in Tamil. Hence *Kali,* the cruel goddess of the Dravidians, Aryanized into *Durga,* was intimately connected with the Minoan Mother Goddess, probably in her chthonic aspect. There is nothing surprising in this, for according to Dawson's *The Age of the Gods* (pages 104 to 105), the worship of the Mother Goddess as *Kali* or *Uma* or *Amma* is not confined to India alone. At Nippur was discovered an image of the Babylonian Mother Goddess, dated 2700 B.C. and another in the extremely ancient Sumerian temple of Ishtar at Assur. Probably the Anatolian goddess *Ma* is the same, especially as the affinities of Crete in neolithic times were closest with the Anatolian mainland, as is evidenced by the community of place and personal names and by the dominant proto-Armenoids in Minoan Crete. Further, " the paphian Aphrodite and her Syrian sisters, such as the Astarte of Byblos, show a strong religious affinity with the Minoan goddess. Not only is she too herself associated

with obelisks and pillars, but there are traces of a youthful male consort with a similar bactylic equivalent" (Evans: (op. cit. Vol. II, p. 843).

The Minoan hieroglyphic signs 'ankh' and 'kenb' are highly suggestive. *Ankh,* Evans makes out from Egyptian analogy as girdle. I suggest that it is derived from the nasalised ahk=to draw in, to contract. Hence Tamil *anki* denotes the close-fitting jacket. Similarly, *kenb*=angle in Minoan, has affinities with the Tamil *kent*=bend the knee at an angle, *konal*=angle. *Elunda,* a mountain in East Crete whence the Greeks derived their "Olumpos", from *elumpa*=rise, can itself be derived from *elunta*=risen. *Hali*carnessos and Carnesso*polis* are the same name, accord-in Evans: (op. cit. Vol. I, p. 10). Now, Polis is itself derived from *palli,* as *e.g.,* Trichina-palli: and the Kanarese equivalent is *halli.* This alternation may be due to a soundshift in Greek or "pre-Greek" from p to h, like the same sound-shift in Greek or "pre-Greek" from p to h, like the same sound-shift in Kanarese.

Sir John Marshall's *Mohenjo Daro and the Indus Valley Civilization* shows numerous svastikas inscribed on the sealings of the ancient Indian culture. According to Rev. Fr. Heras: *India, the Empire of the Svastika,* page 2: "Thousands of years before the Aryas invaded India, the inhabitants of Mohenjo Daro (Nandur), belonging to the Dravidian race, used some small amulets with an inscribed svastika. Besides the svastika is also found in their inscriptions. No doubt remains at present about the origin of the Svastika. It is a Dravidian symbol which was adopted by the Aryas, as so many other institutions, when they entered India". It read *nalam*=prosperity, itself derived from *nal*=four, reminiscent of the four component arms of the crux gammata. The inscription at Harappa, Neg. 3858, No. 3 has five svastikas in this wise *ainalam,* meaning 'five prosperities', i.e. every kind of prosperity. "When the Svastika, following the path of migration from East to West accompanied the Dramilas of Proto-India to Crete,

Greece, Etruria, Iberia and other countries, it kept the meaning of prosperity of the Mohenjo Daro and Ceylon inscriptions" (Cf. Codrington, *Ceylon Coins and Currency,* Nos. 7, 8, 9). And sure enough, "the fylfot or svastika occurs as a Minoan sacred symbol, probably astral or solar" (Evans: Op. cit., Vol. I, pages 357 to 358, 515 and Figs. 134 e, 375, 475). The astral or solar origin of the svastika is heavily discounted by Fr. Heras, who shows that its origin lay in the peculiar aptitude for defence conferred on towns by building them on the *nalam* plan. In Vol. II p. 685, Evans unconsciously agrees with Fr. Heras: "A winding entrance, such as was demanded for defence reasons in the case of primitive Acropolis sites, like that of Tiryns or Knossos" squares very well with the idea elaborated by Heras: Op. cit. pp. 3 and 4. The Meander patterns of E.M. III seem to be lateral evolutions of the svastika symbol (Cf. Evans op. cit. Vol. I. Fig. 134 e) and have points of affinity with such-like Proto-Indian patterns, no less than with Egyptian and Sumerian models.

"A still more striking illustration of the remote derivation of ornamental objects of Mediterranean usage in Neolithic times is seen in the occurrence among the Stone Age deposits in a Ligurian cave of the mother-of-pearl shell, whose nearest habitat is at present the Persian Gulf" (Evans: op. cit. Vol. I. pages 53 and 54). The meeting of East and West, despite Kipling, is further witnessed by the evident traces of silphium, an umbelliferous plant, now extinct in Europe, in *Minoan Crete.* It is akin to the Nartex of North Kashmir. "The possibility suggests itself that the plant may have been actually introduced into Crete and cultivated there in Minoan days" (Cf. Evans: op. cit. Vol. I p. 285). If this be so, it is quite probable that it was introduced directly or indirectly from the Indus Valley Culture Region of Kashmir.

There may be nothing, as Evans suggests, in Chaldaean art to compare with the ivory carvings of the early Nilotic race: but there is a good deal in contemporary and presum-

ably ancient carvings in ivory of Indians, especially of the Malabar Dravidians. The 'Libyan Sheath', so amply illustrated by A. P. Evans in Vol. II op. cit. Supplementary Plates, highly suggests the Dravidian kodukku, or amplified loin cloth. "The Minoan 'fixed rudder' is seen at Madras (and all over Dravidian India) as an integral part of the log rafts or Catumarans, used for communication between the shore and vessels out at sea. The prow of these, like that of the Minoan vessels, is slightly raised as a protection against the surf". (Evans: op. cit. Vol. I p. 240). Another point of useful comparison is the Minoan and Mohenjo-Darian delight in hydraulic devices. The *early* Minoans, like the Sumerians and the inhabitants of Minur (Prabhaspatan) in Kathiawar, built their walls and houses of redbaked bricks, even when they had an abundance of stones round about them. Cf. Heras: "*The Origin of the Round Proto-Indian Seals discovered in Sumer*". p. 6. Furthermore, according to the curious tradition preserved by Diodorus, who drew from Eteo-cretan sources, the ancient Cretans had made use of palm-leaves for writing, a characteristic of Dravidian culture in Ceylon, borne into Crete probably by the Panis, whose badge, the date-palm, the badge of the phoenicians, appears frequently in Minoan vases and inscriptions.

Hitherto we have dealt with the more difficult part of our task; namely, to establish the connexions between the Egyppto-Minoan and the Indian Cultures. Now we pass on to the easier duty with regard to the contacts between the Sumerian and Egypto-Minoan civilizations. "The Neolithic clay figures of Knossos are seen to have collateral relationships, far to the East of the Aegean, in Anatolia, Syria, Cyprus, Mesopotamia, Elam. At the same time the indications thus supplied of conformity in custom and belief entirely coincide with the linguistic evidence, which brings what seems to have been the predominant element in the aboriginal population of Crete into near relationship with the Carians and their kin". It may be noticed, *en passant*, that the Carians according to Herodotus are kin with the

Termiloi, whom Fr. Heras identifies with the Dramilas. Cf. Heras : *India, the empire of the Svastika,* page 5. " The fantastic semi-human types from which the Minotaur sprang themselves suggest the monstrous creations that attach themselves to the legends of Gilgamesh and Ea-bani. So, too, the two-headed composite animals (in Minoan Crete) might be taken to be derivative modifications of the crossed bulls and lions seen up-reared on the Chaldaean cylinders ". These sentences are quotations from Evans : op. cit. Vol. I, pages 53-54, 69. The Bull *Rhyton* found in Crete from M.M.I. a. is clearly of Sumerian origin, as is evident to anyone comparing Figures 156 and 157, the one of steatite from Erech, the other its Minoan derivative. Then again the Minoans were quite skilled at inlaying. But old Chaldaea is the true original home of the art of inlaying. The Mesopotamian lands, owing to the handy supplies of bitumen, had been the original home of the art of inlays in faience and white shell in remote Sumerian times. " From this Mesopotamian field the art was taken over by the late pre-dynastic craftsmen of the Nile Valley. Minoan Crete drew its inspiration not only from this Nilotic source but also from the Eastern homelands of the art ". The primitive bull *Rhytons* of Erech may themselves be safely ascribed to about 2800 B.C. Two Babylonian cylinders were found at Platanos and at Candia in Crete. Both of them are of the same style, dating from the first Babylonian dynasty, that of Hammurabi, called Amraphel, King of Sennaar, in Genesis XIV. The oriental or Sumerian use of the clay tablets for documentary records goes back to the M.M.I.a. period, when specimens of these Babylonian cylinder seals found their way to Crete.

From M.M.I. the traces of Cretan direct relations with the Easternmost Mediterranean coast, including Sumer, became more and more evident. The occurrence of Babylonian cylinders of Hammurabi's time, the imitation of inlaid stone *rhytons* in the form of whole bulls—of remote Sumerian descent, the use of clay tablets as a vehicle for writing, and characteristic features in the structure of the

palaces themselves—these are only a few leading indications of this new current of oriental influence. Like the Cup-bearer, the youths in the Processional Frescoes wear silver armlets and anklets: the latter are also well-marked on the feet of the Minoan godedss. Anklets on Egyptian monuments are associated with Asiatics from a very early period as a sign of dignity.

"The meander patterns of E.M. III. and of Egyptian Sixth to Eighth Dynasties seem to have been due to an element of the population in the Delta or its borders that had maintained many of the traditions of the prehistoric inhabitants of the Nile Valley. This old Nilotic factor is very important in early Cretan culture. Something of the inborn artistic spirit of the old Nilotic people may have been physically infused into the indigenous Cretan population. This early Nilotic culture is, however, closely connected with the Sumerian. Cf. Evans: Vol. II, p. 26 and Suppl. Pl. XII e, for the vessel with straight hull, abruptly rising prow and stern, mast and square sail. At Naquada itself there is a remarkable correspondence between the original structure of the royal tomb there and the typical plans of Chaldean and Assyrian monuments. The early Egyptian stone maces evidence the same Sumerian relationship. The style and even the minutest features of the bulls are early Chaldean. The Ser sheep with their wavy horns on another palette might have been taken over from Sumerian shell panels or the votive tablets from Nippur. But the crowning proof of this influence has now been supplied by the ivory handle of a symmetrically chipped flint knife from Jebel-el-'Arak, on which, side by side with indigenous representations of men wearing the *Lybian sheath,* the hero Gilgames himself appears in Sumerian guise, dompting two lions in the usual opposed attitudes". Cf. Evans: *op. cit.* Vol. II, Supplementary Plate XII. b.

The Probable Origin of Chola Architecture

M. AROKIASWAMI, M.A., PH.D.

Art and architecture have a history of their own which, if discovered, should give us greater interest in our past. Contrasting the Indian conditions with what obtains in the West, Mr. James Fergusson states "We become familiar in the nursery with the names of the heroes of Greek and Roman history. In every school their history and arts are taught, memorials of their greatness meet us at every turn through life, and their thoughts and aspirations become, as it were, part of ourselves . . . . How different is the state of feeling, when from this familiar home we turn to such a country as India!"[1] We are unable to appreciate as yet in full measure the greatness of our art and architectural style, because we have not yet learnt fully the history of those men and dynasties who were responsible for bringing them into being.

Thus the great art of the Cholas so familiar to all students of Indian History has not so far been explained from a historical standpoint. It is a historical fact that the knowledge of using stone for building purposes did not exist in India earlier than the third century B.C., the period of the great Emperor Asoka, and it is in the stone railings at Barhut that the structural art is first found. In South India it is even much later and not till the period of Mahendravarman Pallava is any use apparently made of stone for the building of temples. Small wonder, therefore, if this king, justly styled here as 'Vichitrachitta' exclaims in wonder at his having built "a temple for Brahma, Isvara and Vishnu without the use of bricks, timber, metals and mortar."[2]

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1 Fergusson. *Indian and Eastern Architecture,* Vol. 1, p. 3.
2 *Mandagapattu Inscription;* E I, XVII, p. 14.

The art of stone structure when it appears in South India appears in the form of caves and all the early Pallava constructions in South India are in the form of caves. Here is an evident sign to show that the use of stone for purposes of construction has come down to us through the Buddhist and Jain media, through ascetics who were fond of establishing their dwelling in caves either natural or hewn out of solid rocks. The numerous so-called Pancha Pandava padukkai (lit., the bed of the five Pandava brothers) found in South India in places like A:naimalai, Mettupatti, Virasekamanai and Pallavaram, near Madras, are really the cave-dwellings of Buddhist and Jain monks of bygone days beginning from at least the period of Asoka. Later these very caves seem to have been converted into Hindu temples. Thus the monolithic cave at Namakkal forms the central shrine of the local Ranganatha temple.

There is no doubt that the Pallavas were the first to be influenced by these pioneers of temple architecture. The Tirumurthi cave at Mamallapuram (Mahabalipuram) gives evidence of this and the fact that most of the aforesaid caves bear inscriptions in Pallava-Grantha characters confirms this belief. An inscription[3] from Olakkur (S. Arcot Dt.) dated in the IX century A.D. gives unmistakable indication of both the reality and the vitality of this northern influence, since it speaks of the Pallava King Nandivarman having cut out of rock on the hill of Panchapandavamalai near Arcot the image of a Jain yakshi.

A word on the nature of this influence is here necessary. Almost all the fine specimens of cave architecture in India are either Buddhist or Jain. The world-famous Ajanta caves are Buddhist and the age of their structure ranges over full 800 years—from the II century B.C. to the VI or VII century A.D.—while the fame of Ellora depends much on the Jain structures to be found there. In South

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3 *ARE.*, 1894-95, p. 4. The inspcription referred to is 356 of 1909.

India itself excellent specimens of Buddhist and Jain architecture are to be found mainly in places like Kancheepuram and Pudukottai where the architectural remains show splendid workmanship from earliest times by the Buddhists and the Jains.

The Buddhistic and Jain traditions seem to have been first inherited and transformed into the art of temple structure by the Guptas in the IV century A.D. ; and in the South that tradition has been made to flourish by the Pallavas beginning from the VI century A.D. The Pallava tradition passed on to the Cholas with further embellishments. It is not easy to discover the way of or even assign a reason for this development in India first heralded by the imperial Guptas. From what we do know the Gupta age seems to have been rendered artistic mainly by the work of architecturally-minded feudatories of these kings, of whom the Vakatakas of Berar must be considered as most important. The Vakatakas themselves seem to have been inspired by their own feudatories like Vyagrhadeva who ruled from Kuthara where a small but famous temple for Parvati was erected roughly in the first half of the IV century A.D. Cunningham, writing in the Archaeological Survey Report for 1885, has the following remarkable statement to make on this temple : " The temple of Parvati is one of the most curious and interesting shrines that I have seen. It is curious from the conventional imitations of rock work on all the outer faces of its walls. It is especially interesting as it seems to preserve the old fashion of temples cut in the rock."[4] The Buddhist influence of Ajanta was certainly there in the architectural effort of the Gupta and the Vakataka and no less than three inscriptions of the Vakatakas are to be found in the caves of this place.[5] From Vakatakas the art seems to have passed on to the Vishnugundins of the Doab region in the Andhra country, which was definitely conquered by Harisena Vakataka, c.500 A.D.,

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4 *ASR.*, Vol. XXI, pp. 95-98.

5 Kielhorn's *List*, Nos. 622-624.

when a Vakataka princess, possibly a daughter of Harisena himself, seems to have been given in marriage to the king of the Vishnugundins.[6] The Pallavas would appear to have taken an interest in architecture from their connection with the Vishnugundins, to whom they were related by bonds of marriage. Dr. Jouveau-Dubreuil in fact goes so far as to call Mahendravarman a grandson of a Vishnugundin king, probably the same Vikramendravarman, son of the Vakataka-Vishnugundin alliance.[7]

Dr. Jouveau-Dubreuil assigns a great role to the Telugu country in the evolution of the temple art in South India. " If we remember ", he writes, " that in the Siyamangalam cave there is the image of a lion resembling the one found in the seal of the Chikkula plates, that the Undavalli sculptures resemble those of the Pallava caves, that Undavalli stands on the banks of the Krishna, where the Vishnugundins had reigned and that the inscriptions of Mahendravarman I at Trichinopoly and at Pallavaram contain Telugu epithets, we shall be struck with these coincidences ".[8] Thus we find the first temples in the Tamil country—those owing their origin to Mahendravarman I—as pure rock-cut ones as those of Singavaram, Mandagapattu, Tirukalukunram and Mamandur and the first temples in which stones are placed one upon the other are those of Narasimhavarman II (700-710 A.D.) almost a century later and these are the Panamalai temple, Kailasanatha temple of Kancheepuram and the Shore temple of Mamallapuram.

In his book *Archeologie du Sud de l'Inde* the same writer divides the development of South Indian architecture into five periods beginning from 600 A.D. to the present day. Though the chronological limitation of exactly 250 years between the first four stages may not be correct, the periods here enunciated do give us a rough idea of the whole

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6 *EI.*, IV., 195.

7 Dubreuil ; *Pallava Antiquities*, II, 35.

8 *Op., cit., Loc., cit.*

development. According to him, the passage from the Pallava to the Chola style of architecture began round about the year A.D. 850 and persisted in developing till A.D. 1100. The temples of Ladapuram, Alambakkam and Brahmadesam as well as those of Malayadipatti (Pudukottai) and Nartamalai in the same region belong roughly to the same period, the period of the Pallava Kings Dantivarman and Nripatunga in the last quarter of the VIII century A.D. All these temples bear on their face such traits of both the Pallava and Chola styles, that it is not easy to decide to which style they really belong. The one great distinguishing feature, however, lies in the angular shape which the corbel takes in Chola days from the round style of the Pallava times. The new Chola temples are all dedicated to Siva in his various names and forms. Thirdly, most of these temples rise in the basin of the Cauvery. The Chola temple-builder seems to pay special attention to the '*nanthi*' or the buull figure and a new panel model which we see for example, at Nartamalai. In general, the vimana now comes in for development. The Rajeswara temple of Tanjore is a magnificient example of all these.

Commenting on the temple at Nartamalai as also on the aforesaid Siva temple of Malayadipatti, Dr. Jouveau-Duvreuil says: "Strictly speaking these monuments are not the works of the Pallavas but of the Muttaraiyars."[9] He would indicate that it was through the channel of the Muttaraiyars, the chieftains of Tanjore from whom Aditya is said to have conquered his new empire, the Cholas got their taste for and knowledge of temple structure. There seems to be much truth in this statement. Some of the inscriptional records in the Alambakkam temple above cited mention the 'Marpidigu-eri', the rock-cut tank at Tiruvellarai (also called 'Marpidigu-perunginaru'), which must certainly refer to some Muttaraiyan chief ruling in these parts in the period anterior to the Cholas since the name 'Marpidigu' is distinctly Muttaraiyan.[10]

9 Dubreuil; *op., cit.*, II, 16.
10 *ARE.*, 1909, p. 88.

There can be little doubt that it was through the agency of the chieftains that the art of temple-building spread from dynasty to dynasty and from region to region in the north as well as in the south of India. Mention has already been made of the service of the Vakataka feudatory in the growth of the architecture of the Guptas, of the service of Vyagrhadeva of Kuthara in the growth of the Vakataka style, and possibly of the Pallava in the development of the Vishnugundin art. Many feudatories of the Pallavas themselves inspired their masters with new ideas. One classical example is found in the inscription found on two pillars at the entrance to the cave at Vallam, two miles to the east of Chingleput. The inscription records that the cave was hewn by Skandasena, son of Vasantapriyaraja and vassal of Mahendravarman Pallava.[11]

Now, coming to the Cholas reference has already been made to the Muttaraiyan service. But more than these there was a dynasty of chieftains ruling in the modern region of Pudukottai from roughly the middle of the V century to the middle of the VIII century A.D. who had as much connection with the Muttaraiyans as with the Pallavas and the imperial Cholas. I refer to the Irukkuvels of Kodumbalur, a ruling dynasty of chieftains hitherto very little known, who seem to have had a large part in the growth and extensive development of the architecture of the Cholas. The last of them is called Adityavarman, evidently reminding one of the Chola name, Aditya and the first of them (name lost) is called " the vanquisher of the Pandya elephants " evidently in their fight against the rising Pallavas. Their Muttaraiyan connection is well borne out by the very name of one of the Muttaraiyan chieftains called " Ilangovadirayan ".[12] An inscription from Tiruvellarai (Trichinopoly District) mentions " Sattan Marpidigu Ilangovelan "—evidently a Muttaraiyan with Irukkuvel connection—as one of the feudatories of Nandivarman of Tellaru fame.[13]

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11 Dubreuil; op., cit., 1, 27.
12 For a detailed discussion see Arokiaswami; *Vellar Basin*, pp. 89 ff.
13 88 of 1910; see also *ARE*, 1910, p. 71.

Certain points of general consideration must be first mentioned in positing this Irukkuvel connection with the art of the Cholas. In the first place it ought to be remembered that the region of the Krishna and the Godavari basins, the land of the Vishnugundin art, the very caves of Ajanta replete with Buddhist monuments and even the region of modern Mysore were within the purview of these Velir chieftains during perhaps centuries before they entered the modern territory of Pudukottai, where they set up their capital at Kodumbalur.[14] Consider then the time of their rise to power in the south, the period, running between the V and the VIII Centuries A.D.—the age *par excellence* of the cultivation of the art of temple-building. The earliest mention of a temple in South India, so far as modern research has shown it to us, occurs in the grant of Charudevi dated in the IV century A.D.[15] It would therefore appear that these Velir chieftains were present in the very region and at the very time the art of temple construction was being born in the Tamil country. Further, the Ajanta inscriptions of Harisena Vakataka show among his conquests the region of Kuntala—none other than modern Mysore,[16] the very territory where these chieftains would appear to have stayed in the period anterior to their entry into the further south of India, as is evidenced by the poems of Kapilar contained in the *Puram Four Hundred*,[17] Put:a nhap:nu:t:u. All this is circumstantial evidence, though it clearly sets forth the plausibility of the Irukkuvel connection with the temple art.

But there is more direct and pointed reference to the Irukkuvel connection with the Chola art. Most of the early temples of the Cholas are found in the region of modern Pudukottai, the home of Jain influence in South India and the region of Irukkuvel rule for four centuries. The Nartamalai temple in this very region, reputed as one of the best specimens of the early Chola style, strikingly resembles the

14 See Arokiaswami, op., cit., Chap. IV.
15 *Indian Antiquary*, IX, pp. 100 ff; See also EI, Vols. VI and VIII.
16 *A SW* I., IV, pp. 124-129; Smith, JRAS., April, 1914.
17 *Puram*, 201 and 202.

Muchukundeswara temple at Kodumbalur inscriptionally attributable to the Irukkuvels. The pond in front of the temple bears the name of Bhuti Vikramakesari—evidently the last chieftain of the Irukkuvels—and the same inscription indicates the Jain preferences of the said chieftain, in that it records a grant made by him to a coterie of Jain monks.[18] The Muvarkovil of the same Kodumbalur is also definitely of the same chieftain. "Having built the three shrines he set up Mahesvara", the inscription in the temple tells us in unmistakabie words.[19] From this it would also appear that Vikramakesari really built three temples in memory of himself and his two wives, as the epigraphist thinks, at Kodumbalur, for which reason they seem to have gone by the name of Muvarkovil in course of time. The writer of the *Pudukottah Manual* thinks that a medium sized *nandhi* was also placed in front of these three temples. How strikingly like the Nartamalai temple of the early Chola style and the Tiruttani temple of the late Pallava style these Kodumbalur temples look will be clear only to those who see them.

It has already been pointed out that it was in the region of the Cauvery that the first temples of the Cholas appeared. Now, many of them like the two temples at Tirupalaturai and Tiruchendurai respectively, the stone temple at Andanallur, the Panchanadisvara and the Pasupatisvara temples, outside the village of Allur, the Sundaresvara temple at Nangavaram, the Siva temple at Konerirajapuram, the Valisvara temple at Turaiyur in Musiri and the temple of Irungolisvaramudaiyanayanar—a very significant name indeed—in Uttamacholapuram have all been built by one or other of the Irukkuvel family, like Pudi-Adicca-Pidariyar, daughter of Tennavan Ilangovel and queen of Arikulakesari, son of Parantaka, Sembiyah Irukkuvel *alias* Pudi Parantakan and Irungolan Adivallan Gangaikondachola.[20]

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18 *ARE*, 1907-08, p. 80.
19 *Ibid*, pp. 87-88.
20 319 of 1903; EI, Vol. VII, p. 141; 316 of 1903; 359, 360 of 1903; EI., Vol. XV, p. 50; 337, 347, 549 of 1906.

The Chola King Aditya is said to have adopted all these temples as his own and we find Parantaka endowing them as temples built by his great father.[21] This must be considered as an important datum pointing to the Irukkuvel-Chola combination in the matter of the development of the art of temple-building. It is a fact well-known to all students of South Indian history that the Chola King Aditya is famous for having built temples all along the banks of the Cauvery. It must be remembered that not a little of this fame ought to go to these little known chieftains and their progeny.

The remarkable rock-cut temple at Tirumalai (Ramnad district) attributed to Sembiyan Maduriyar (in all probability an Irukkuvel princess), Queen of Aditya, has a life-size image of this Chola king with an attendant on each side depicted in a strikingly Pallava style of devotion.

There is yet another consideration which gives a convincing proof of the Irukkuvel-Chola connection here adumbrated. This is derived from two inscriptions from the aforehaid Tirupalathurai and Tiruchendurai temples which clearly mention that they were inspired by the art of the Tirupudisvara temple at Kodumbalur.[22] There is no doubt that the reference here is to Bhuti (Pudi) Vikramakesari and the Muvarkovil that he had built at that place and name Tirupudisvaram—"Rishapaperuman adigal of Tirupudisvaram temple"—occurs in a record from the Muchukundesvara temple of the same place.[23]

To conclude, there is no doubt that the Chola art of temple construction is merely the amplification of what the Pallavas began and the part played by numerous feudatories of the respective dynasties in the evolution of this art can never be exaggerated. If the Muttaraiyans of Tanjore played a large part, as Dr. Dubreuil thinks, the Irukkuvels of Kodumbalur played even a larger part.

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21 EI., IX, p. 50.
22 253, 293 of 1903.
23 138 of 1907.

Books of Note

(The books reviewed here are written in English)

THE SAIVA SIDDANTA THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

By Dr. V. PONNIAH

(Published by the Annamalai University in its Philosophical series—Price Rs. 8/-.)

The modern world of Philosophy knows next to nothing of the Saiva Siddhanta School of thought which is claimed as the unique contribution of the Tamilians. The authoritative expositions of this school, as of Sri Vaishnavism are found mostly in Tamil, a language which has not received at the hands of the savants of the world as much attention as it deserves. Only a few of the Saivite *Agamas* have been printed, and that in the Grantha script, very little known outside Tamil land. The philosophical works in Tamil, except for a few translations and sketchy accounts often written with a bias, remain sealed books to the modern world. The present work in English, the international language, on the special aspect of Saiva Siddhanta —its epistomology—is a timely contribution. This critique of knowledge following the methods of old commentators gives out at every step the views of other schools of Indian philosophy, before establishing its conclusions ; and in this way this book serves also as an introduction to the theory of knowledge of other systems of Indian thought.

Saiva Siddhanta philosophy is claimed to be logical in its approach, to start with, establishing its categories through logical syllogisms though it ultimately has to depend upon the mystic experience for its validity. The first part of works like *Sivajnanabhodam* is known as the book of proofs and, *Sivagnanasiddhiyar,* therefore starts

with the theory of knowledge through an elementary elucidation of the various kinds of proofs. That is one reason, why Sivajnana Swamigal translated the primer of Indian Logic *Tarkasangraha* with its commentary *Annambattiyam* into Tamil, as a part of his monumental commentary on *Sivajnanabhodam* and in explaining this portion of that commentary, the present book reads like an exposition of *Annambattiyam* serving thus a purpose probably never intended by our author. A critique of knowledge therefore becomes the basis of any study of Saivasiddhanta and the present work under review satisfies this great need with reference to the non-Tamil students of this Philosophy.

In his introductory chapter the author aspires to be a champion of the unique ancient Tamil Philosophy though he has to conclude only with his regret on the loss or absence of all its ancient systematic works. The second chapter on Saiva Siddhanta literature therefore starts with the books in Sanskrit—the *Agamas* (interpreted here as those coming from Tamil) or the *Tantras* (a word held as a translation of the Tamil word *Nool*. Here he might have noted the *Agamas* as known to the Tamilians growing in number from the times of Tivakaram through the days of Pinkalantai to the times of Chutamani Nighantu. The second part of this chapter gives a short account of the philosophical works and the mystic or devotional poetry on which this philosophy is based.

The third chapter discusses the nature of knowledge according to Saiva Siddhanta with a criticism of other schools of thought. "Saiva Siddhanta regards *jnanam* or knowledge as an essential quality of soul." (In this philosophy souls are many and non material and the real universe, therefore can exist apart from these though not separate.), consciousness being pervasive and coterminous with the soul. "The *atman* in cognizing an object gets illuminated by Siva Sakti, assumes the character of the object that is pervaded by its consciousness, identifies itself with the object and thus becomes aware of it" as, "the corres-

pondence between the material object to the psychic idea (one gets), can be judged only by consciousness". The sympathetic exposition of our author is not marred by any prejudice or bias, except if it be against other philosophies.

The fourth chapter explains the forms of knowledge with an illustrative table of classification. The fifth is on the factors of valid knowledge—the knower, the known, the means or measures of knowledge and explains also the peculiar terms of Saivism—*pasa jnanam* and *Siva jnanam*. The sixth chapter is on the theory of perception and its classification, where at the end the perception of absence (*abhava*) is also discussed. The seventh, the eighth and the ninth chapters respectively on the theory of Inferences, the theory of verbal testimony and Fallacies are elucidations of Indian Logic following the footsteps of Annambhatta and Sivagnana Swamigal. The tenth chapter on Truth and Error is really an exposition of the theory of Error or illusion, according to various schools. "Both valid and invalid cognitions will be valid as cognitions when the Samagrias (totality of conditions) free from doubt and error function, there arises a cognition attended by a belief in the object made known. No extraneous causes are required to cognise its validity. If however the totality of conditions necessary for the generator of the cognition is defective, no such cognition arises as the grounds for doubt and error are not eliminated". "Validity of true cognition is intrinsic but according to the Siddhanta the invalidity of cognition in which a rope is apprehended as a snake is something brought from without—'*anyatakhyati*'". In the concluding portion of this chapter the author is ambitious enough to attempt at finding a position comparable to that of Saiva Siddhanta, forgetting this will be attempting to find square holes for round pegs. He asserts, "The Saiva Siddhantin is a presentative realist of the type of Bertrand Russel". In the absence of a greater elaboration and explanation of this cryptic remark, this cannot be understood by us. But the book is a useful contribution to our

knowledge of Indian Philosophy in general, not only of Saiva Siddhanta. The author could have given us the differences amongst the various schools of Saivite Philosophy with reference to this theory of knowledge and this would have emphasised the fact that followers of Saivism as a religion have followed various theories of other schools and thus grouped themselves into schools of Saivite philosophy. This would have brought to the prefront the indebtedness of this school to the various ancient schools of Indian philosophical thought.

NATURE IN ANCIENT TAMIL POETRY

By REV. DR. XAVIER S. THANI NAYAGAM
(Published by Tamil Literature Society, Tuticorin, South India, Price Rs. 5/-.)

This is the thesis on the basis of which the Annamalai University has conferred its M.Litt. Degree on the Rev. Doctor; but this thesis is something out of the ordinary and therefore richly deserves the statement on the fly leaf of this book, " If the author's studies were followed, foreign University halls would hear not only the names of Virgil and Wordsworth but also Kapilar and Paranar. The Tamils gave to the world an interpretation of Nature that in its completeness and novelty and association with human love is more fascinating than the interpretation in Sanskrit, Greek and Latin poetry. An interesting book altogether, the facts and interpretation contained in it should come as a revelation to the scholar as well as to the general reader ". Yes ! it will come as a revelation ; for in spite of its being recognised as a classical language by Westerners like Rev. G. U. Pope and Dr. Caldwell, the classical Literature of Tamil remains unknown to the world, for want of works like the present in the language of international currency. The subject is also of great intrinsic interest.

The introductory chapter gives a brief survey of the ancient Tamil Poetry. The first chapter starts with an

explanation of Anthropogeography, emphasising the diversified landscape of South India colouring its poetry. The theory that the sounds of a language are the products of its climate has been exploded but geography does influence the poetic vision and imagery; as seen especially in the Tamilian's love of shade in their burning tropics, the shade of the umbrella, as the author points out, as much as that of the tree, having come to signify sovereignty, benignity, kindness, favour and grace. The second chapter on "Nature and the Life of the People" referring to the development of Nature poetry, starting as childlike delight, passing through appreciation of its physically beneficial as well as useful forces, to its final stage of interpretation of Nature as being in relationship with man, points out that the advanced culture of the ancient Tamil poetry has reached the last stage of this development though its conventions take us back to an anterior period of their intimate life with Nature, always surrounded by flowers and trees, an intimacy which explains the highly developed state of the Tamilian Fine Arts.

The third chapter is on Poetic conventions, a knowledge of which is necessary for a correct understanding and appreciation of Tamil Poetry. The five-fold divisions of the country into Mountains, Jungles, Littorals, Riverines and Deserts sounds almost modern. As our author writes, "The accuracy with which the Tamils divided land into five regions which are the environments of the five basic types of culture and enunciated that, since a different way of life was conditioned by each environment, therefore different types of poetry should correspond to the different regions is baffling in its antiquity. A complete and accurate study of Nature was imposed on the Tamil Poets by poetic tradition and rule". Nature formed the sympathetic background for man's drama of life.

Our author rightly praises the absence of hyperbolic conceits and points out that this fidelity to Nature is not a decadent literalism. The writer is very enthusiastic about

the realistic approach of the Cangkam poets but it must be remembered that the literary conventions themselves breathe the spirit of idealism.

The fourth chapter is on the "Historical and Ethical interpretation of Nature"—referring to the Poet's allusions to contemporary and past events and their readings of the reflections of righteousness in Nature; for, the Cangkam poets learned their lessons of wisdom from the plants and animals too. The fifth Chapter on religious interpretation of Nature proves the thesis that "the belief in one God, Creator and Supreme Ruler of the Universe, was prevalent in Cangkam times and once the elements of Brahmanism and Puranic religion are separated from Cangkam literature, the elements that remain present a very elevated stage of religion". Though one many sympathise with the optimism of the author, the truth has to be confessed that it is not so easy to disentangle the elements especially when we remember that the Cangkam Literature probably belongs to the beginning of the Christian Era by which time a more or less homogeneous culture of India has become developed through the fusion of various trends. In this view of things attempts at attributing a later age to *Paripadal* simply because of its pronounced religious nature are not convincing; for, this religious atmosphere cannot be later than the beginning of the Christian Era. But no one will quarrel with our author's conclusion: "Tamil Religion was intimately connected with the Tamilian concept of Nature".

The Five-fold division is given a separate chapter (Ch. 6), with its *Puram* and *Akam* classification of activities, giving us in addition as Dr. Pope observes, a novel form of the language of flowers. In passing, our author differentiates between *Mullai* or heroine's virtuous suppression of grief, *Neydal* or the pitiful expression of grief and *Palai* or the pangs of long separation and throws out an illuminating suggestion. "Between these three regions there is a progressive length of separation progressive element of danger and consequently progressive sorrow; The expla-

nation is partly historical based on the facts of the short sojourn distant pastures, the longer voyage on the seas, and the longest separation of a travel to distant lands for livelihood ". The only remark one has to make in this connection is that *Neydal* represents a feeling of despair beyond redemption ; for, the *Neydal* drum is the funeral drum, thus suggesting that the sorrow of *Neydal* is more intense than any other. Our author states that he along with Mr. P. T. Srinivasa Aiyangar believes in the historical origin of the five fold division—the conventions of a later age having been the historical facts of a previous age. Mr. Aiyangar gave expression to the common belief. Our author proceeds to write, " I do not believe that *Palai* was included in the first and original classification because *Palai* as such does not exist in the Tamil country ". The term *Nanilam* probably will justify our author's conclusion ; but in view of the fact that more than 50% of the Cangkam poetry deals with this *Palai,* one wonders whether this *Palai* might not have existed in the original home of the Dravidians. *Palai* is often described as existing, outside the Tamil country. Nor is " desert " a correct translation of *Palai,* as the author points out. After these preliminaries, our author gives us in his chapter on " the Regional landscapes " the visions of the poets of Nature as they saw and experienced—real and synthetic descriptions—synthetic in the sense that they are not describing any simple spot. This chapter is therefore a gorgeous and sumptuous feast of the choicest dishes of Cangkam Poetry.

The Last Chapter aims at a comparative study of Nature Poetry in Tamil, Sanskrit and European languages. " Nature is decorative and ornate in South India ", and so is according to our author, the poetry of the Tamils. It is the conclusion of the author that Cangkam poetry comes after ages of literary culture unlike Vedic poetry. " Everywhere we see profusion, riotous colour—a reflection of Nature in our civilized poetry and even in the flamboyant sarees that our women wear "—so writes our author ; but according to him, the riotous imagery and personification are however

all Aryan ; for, the Tamilians are, according to him, realistic and logical. Perhaps he is correct ; but one may ask whether the gender in Sanskrit on which he relies may not be the result of supposed uniformity of grammar sensed by its speakers rather than that of their riotous imagination. Again our author writes, " The Tamil heroines do not water the creeper because they feel as Shakuntala, like real sisters to them ". It is not religious philosophy that has influenced Kalidasa but the feeling of universal kinship which ordinary folk experience in their rustic surroundings of domestic animals, birds and plants, a feeling which Goethe praised so much. The Cangkam mother feeds the plant, as her own first born, with honey and milk, whilst her daughter, brought up in that self same atmosphere of kinship with the plant life, loves the tree as her own elder sister, refusing to embrace her lover under its cool shade. In Greek and Latin poetry we are told Gods behind the trees were addressed ; in Tamil poetry the objects themselves are addressed. Nature there in Europe according to our author is the platform for the drama of Man. Nature here in Tamil land is the sympathetic scenery.

Lastly our author closes his study with a reference to Wordsworth who has struck a new note in his line " Mighty Being is awake " as referring to Nature. The *Paripadal* ode giving expression to a similar experience is quoted, but our author hastens to add that " these sentiments were confined to devotion and did not influence the secular poetry of the Tamils ". It is very doubtful whether the verses of *Paripadal* will support this theory. But unfortunately we have not been blessed with all that the Cangkam poets had written. One has to mourn with Goethe, " Literature is a fragment of a fragment ; of all that ever happened or has been said but a fraction has been written and of this but little is extant ".

The printing and get up leave nothing to be desired. The publishers and the author deserve our congratulations.

WORDS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

By R. P. SETHU PILLAI, B.A., B.L.

University of Madras—1953. Price Rs. 2/- (67 pages).

This brief study is extremely interesting and suggestive. The author deals chiefly with semantics and has given a great many examples in Tamil of the changes that meanings of words have undergone in the past. He deals with these changes under the titles, Restriction, Expansion, Degradation, Elevation and Variation. This is a book that every lover of Tamil should read in order to understand the beauty and significance of words in the Tamil language.

THE INDO-ASIAN CULTURE

Published quarterly by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, Hyderabad House, New Delhi-1.
Annual subscription Rs. 4/-. Single copy Re. 1/-.

The Indo-Asian Culture which is in its second year of publication and ably edited by Dr. A. C. Sen merits the attention of all students of culture. It aims at presenting Indian culture to the world and at interpreting Indian culture in the larger context of world culture. The articles are always by eminent scholars and are learned studies. The quarterly is very well illustrated and not the least interesting feature is the manner in which it presents also modern cultural trends in India.

News and Notes

PRIZE FOR *Tamil Inbam*

We offer our heartiest congratulations to Sri R. P. Sethu Pillai on the award by the Government of India of a prize for his book *Tamil Inbam*. This is a fitting recognition of the life-long service which Sri R. P. Sethu Pillai has rendered to Tamil Language and Literature. The public of Madras paid tributes to Sri R. P. Sethu Pillai's Scholarship and distinguished services at one of the finest and best attended functions ever seen in the city (at Annamalai Manram) under the presidentship of Sri K. Kamaraj, Chief Minister, Madras Government.

HINDI AND THE SOUTH

The article, " The problem of a National or Official Language in India " by a Sentamilan published in this issue is most timely. The people of South India are very much agitated by the announcement that examinations of the Union Public Service Commission for recruitment to the All India Services will in future be held in Hindi. The statement in the Madras Legislative Assembly by Sri C. Subramaniam, Minister for Finance was however reassuring. He told the house that in terms of the resolution adopted by the Working Committee of the Congress, these examinations could be conducted either in Hindi or in the regional language. He said, " there was no question of the Union Public Service Commission saying that all its examinations would be held only in Hindi. I do not think this Government will agree to that position at any time ". While this is to be welcomed it is for consideration whether it would meet completely the present position regarding languages in the various States and especially in South India. At present all the examinations of the Union Public Service Commission are held in English. It is doubtful whether a change could be made all of a sudden to the

regional language in all the subjects in which the examinations are held. As long as the medium of instruction in University continues to be English, it will be difficult for candidates at the Union Public Service Commission examinations to express themselves freely and effectively in any other language. Moreover, the regional languages of India are in varying States of development in regard to their suitability for expressing modern knowledge especially in the scientific field. Competitive examinations should be held in conditions that are uniform for all the candidates drawn from various linguistic areas. It is doubtful whether such uniformity could be secured when the candidates write their examinations in different languages. We hope that the exhaustive discussion of the question in the article published in this issue will receive close attention from everybody.

MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION IN UNIVERSITIES

We welcome the courageous stand taken by Sri C. Subramaniam, Minister for Education on the question of the medium of instruction in Universities.

Speaking in the budget debate in the Legislative Assembly, he felt sorry that the Vice-Chancellors of the Southern Universities who recently met in conference had avoided that subject. A decision on this subject, he said, should not be avoided, however, unpopular it might be considered. He went further and said that if the Universities did not take action in the matter, there would come a time when the Government would have to act. Referring to the subject, the Vice-Chancellor of the Madras University, Dr. A. Lakshmanaswamy Mudaliar said in the Madras University Senate that there was already a provision permitting any college to offer instruction in the humanities in any language and that it had been decided to notify the Principals of colleges once again of this provision.

The Minister for Education is apparently following up his announcement in the legislature as he has proposed a

conference of educational authorities to take place on the 18th of June to discuss this question.

TAMIL AS OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

There has recently been a widespread demand for the use of Tamil as the official language of the Madras State. Sri C. Subramaniam speaking in the Legislative Assembly stoutly defended the practice of Ministers speaking in Tamil against the protest of some non-Tamil members. Sri C. Subramaniam, leader of the house, while sympathising with the point of view of a small number who did not understand Tamil pointed out that they should realise not merely the difficulties of one sixth of the house which did not understand Tamil but also those half of the members of the house who were unable to follow the proceedings in English. Therefore they had to take a practical point of view and see that the business of the house was carried on in such a way that most of its members were able to follow the proceedings. After all at present when questions were put in Tamil, the Ministers replied in Tamil. If a Minister could express himself better in Tamil he could do so. By such an arrangement they were not doing anything contrary to the constitution. The Ministers were trying to make the best of a bad situation in a multilingual state.

Speaking in the Legislative Council on the same subject, Sri M. Bakthavatsalam, Leader of the house, said, that there was no difference of opinion that Tamil should be the official language of the Madras State. But the question was how far it was feasible at present. He said an experiment was being tried in Trichy District for the past few years which, he was sorry, has not proved successful. The first thing to be done was to see that effective steps were taken to make the experiment a success in that district, before extension to one or other districts could be considered.

The Minister was speaking during discussion on a resolution moved by Sri A. Gajapathi Nayagar recommending to the Government " to replace English by Tamil in all the proceedings conducted in the district offices of Chingle-

put, South Arcot, North Arcot and in all their correspondence *inter se* and with the departments of Secretariat". During the debate Sri T. M. Narayanaswamy Pillai a Founder Member of the Academy, said that the resolution did not imply opposition to English, which on account of its importance and usefulness as an International language should be retained and given a proper place equal to that of Tamil. Sri A. N. Alla Pichai supporting the resolution said that it was a move in the right direction and appealed to Tamil enthusiasts to help in the growth of Tamil by assimilating words from other languages.

The leader of the house agreed that there was option in the Constitution for a State to adopt an official language and he could never agree to have any other official language for the Madras State except Tamil. He also agreed that a law must be enacted to make Tamil the official language. But it might not be possible to hurry with it because there were many terms which required to be put into proper words understandable to the common man.

The resolution was withdrawn.

Speaking on the same subject while inaugurating the Kambar festival at Karaikudi on 4th April, Sri C. Subramaniam, Minister for Finance said, that there was no difference of opinion on the demand for making Tamil a State language. The difference was only with regard to the time by which it should be given effect to. The time was not far off when the medium of instruction in the Universities, and even of research, would be Tamil. They had however to get over some hurdles in this respect. Some people had advocated the adoption of pure Tamil terminology without the admixture of foreign words. He thought that such people had no faith in their own mother tongue. They should take a lesson from the history of the English language which had attained an international position because its promoters had a wide outlook and believed that a free admixture of foreign words would contribute to the growth of the language and they had no linguistic animosity or narrow

outlook. If Tamil should grow into a State language or become a medium of instruction in the Universities, they should not hesitate to accept foreign terminology. There were others who asked if they could carry on the administration in Tamil as conveniently as in English. They reminded one of the persons who wanted to learn swimming without a dip in the water. Unless they made a bold experiment facing the realities they could never introduce a Tamil medium as otherwise there would be no end to waiting for Tamil to be made perfect. The success of the experiment at the University level would surely determine the possibilities of extending the use of mother tongue. The only course open to them was to face the situation boldly and carry out the experiment after planning it well.

U.S.A. SCHOLARSHIP

Sri V. I. Subramanian, Professor of Tamil, Travancore University has been awarded a Rock Feller Foundation research fellowship to enable him to study linguists principally at the Summer Institute of Linguistics at Chicago and at Cornell University.

TAMIL MANUSCRIPTS IN LONDON

Dr. A. Chidambaranathan Chettiar, Prof. and Head of the department of Tamil, Annamalai University, has returned after a study tour of British Universities. Giving his impressions of the tour, Dr. Chettiar said that there are several Tamil manuscripts relating to *Tolkappium, Periapuranam, Tirukkural* and the works of Vedanayakam Pillai in the libraries of the Royal Asiatic Society and the India office in London. He also observed that the Cambridge University library was in possession of some Tamil manuscripts like *Tiruvoymozhi, Neethi Venba* and others. He found early printed books of some importance for Tamilians in the British Museum library, Royal Asiatic Society library, the India Office library in London and the Bodlean library in Oxford. Some of them, he said, were worth reprinting.

Dr. Chettiar said that the sculpture of Kannagi supposed to exist in the British Museum did not appear to be a representation of Kannagi at all, but a replica of Tara which one came across in several Chinese iconographs. The present sculpture in the British Museum seemed to have been taken over to London from Ceylon and appeared to belong to the 10th century A.D.

ENCYCLOPAEDIA IN TAMIL

The second volume of Tamil encyclopaedia published by the Tamil Valarchi Kazhagam was released on the 15th April by Sri Sri Prakasa, Governor of Madras in the presence of a select gathering of Tamil savants.

TECHNICAL TERMS

While releasing the second volume of the Tamil Cyclopaedia Sri Sri Prakasa said that he was glad that the Tamil Valarchi Kazhagam had found Tamil equivalents to 13,000 technical terms. These technical words, he observed, were always disturbing factors in the growth of any language. It would be a great thing if they succeeded in finding terms common to all the languages of the country. Though he was not averse to borrowing expressive and vivid words from other languages and making them their own yet, he would say that they should resort to borrowing from other languages only if they fail to find suitable terms in their own literature.

Speaking on the same subject at the same function, Sri C. Subramaniam, Minister for Education, indicated that the Madras Government might appoint a committee to finalise Tamil equivalents for modern words and technical terms. The Minister said that the sooner the controversy about the use of technical and modern words was ended the better it would be for the introduction of Tamil as the State language and the medium of instruction in Universities.

Sri C. Rajagopalachariar said that the work of finding apt and easy Tamil equivalents for modern words and

technical terms was most difficult. In this they stood the danger of striking at the wrong word if they blindly copied words of other languages in usages and attempted to find Tamil equivalent. Taking the word 'Vice-Chancellor' as an instance, Rajaji said the Tamil equivalent *Thunaivendan* was erroneous. It would be more apt if they had as Tamil equivalent a word to mean head of a University. He also expressed his dissatisfaction with the term *Kalai Kalanjiam* for encyclopedia. It was not appropriate enough as Kalai has come to be associated with art. *Arivu Kalanjiam* (store house of knowledge) was a more apt word. He mentioned these examples only to impress on them the difficulties in the way of the choice of the right word. He added that for the sake of purity and orthodoxy they should not sacrifice apt words expressive of the function or object they wanted to convey.

OBITUARY

The sad news of the sudden and premature death on 1st March, 1955 of Miss E. T. Rajeswari, Prof. of Physics, Queen Mary's Collgee, a founder member of the Academy of Tamil Culture, came as a great shock. Her hobby was Tamil literature and philosophy and she had specialised in Sangam literature, Thevaram, Thiruvachakam, Kaivalyam and Gnanavasishtam, Thayumanavar and Kamba Ramayanam. Her articles on Tataka and Akalikai which appeared in this journal were very much appreciated. She was a brilliant speaker with a rare gift of high class humour making even abstruse ideas interesting and vivid. She had a passion for expressing scientific thoughts in Tamil and that became her life work. Her books in Tamil on Einstein's Relativity, the Atom, the Sun, Balloons, and the Airship have become classics in that field. Her book *Encyclopaedia of Child Psychology* which won the Madras University prize and the Government of Madras prize—got through the Tamil Academy—has suggested various technical terms which have come to stay.

It is indeed a great misfortune that at a time when the Tamil country is serious about making Tamil the medium of instruction in colleges, one who was a pioneer in this field and who could have been of immense help should have passed away so early in her life, for she was only 48 when she died.

Transliteration of Tamil into English adopted in this Journal

அ	a
ஆ	a:
இ	i
ஈ	i:
உ	u
ஊ	u:
எ	e
ஏ	e:
ஐ	ai
ஒ	o
ஓ	o:
ஔ	au
ஃ	x
க	k
ங	ng
ச	c
ஞ	nj
ட	t:
ண	n:
த	th
ந	nh
ப	p
ம	m
ய	y
ர	r
ல	l
வ	v
ழ	l-
ள	l:
ற	t
ன	n

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Remittance for a single copy may be sent in Indian stamps. A single subscription is best paid by crossed postal order favouring ' Tamil Culture '.

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Published by the Hony. Secretary, Academy of Tamil Culture, Thamilakam, Chetput, Madras-31, and printed by K. S. S. Rajan at The Jupiter Press, Ltd., 109-C, Mount Road, Madras-18.